

The following is a rough transcript, not in its final form and may be updated.

Father, Glorify Your Name

John 12:27-33

Intro: We're looking at the Lord's response to the news that an unnamed group of certain Greeks had requested an audience with Him. The most surprising consequence of this request was that it signified to Jesus that His hour had finally arrived. The coming of these Gentiles proved beyond any doubt that the climatic conclusion of His earthly ministry was now upon Him. The hour Jesus refers to here is nothing less than His ultimate death on a Roman cross. These Greeks had expressed their desire to see Jesus and as we apply ourselves to properly understand the Lord's response to their request; we will also see Jesus in a more proper light.

27-28- We've all heard the expression that salvation is free, and it is, at least for us. But the gift of salvation itself was not free. We all know that salvation cost both God the Father and God the Son a great deal yet none of us really fully understand what it cost the God-head to forgive our sins. We often pray for forgiveness, as well we should since Jesus Himself has instructed us to do so. Yet, we rarely consider how much it cost God to make that prayer possible.

How much did salvation cost God? Will any believer ever fully know the answer? It's not likely since none could ever fully enter into the experience of Jesus as He was separated from His Father during the time He was hanging on that cross. But that's not the end of the discussion on the subject. For, while we'll never understand it fully, we can still begin to understand it, at least in part, by what the Bible has to tell us about it. For example, we can learn from our text here that just a few days before the crucifixion, Jesus was troubled; or more literally: His soul was in turmoil! While our text helps us to better understand Jesus, it also provides an equally valuable and more personal lesson. Not only does it teach us about Jesus, it also teaches how we can find comfort when our souls are similarly troubled.

Before we look at the reason why Jesus was troubled, we should consider the fact that He was is quite startling. If Jesus were just another man, we wouldn't be surprised for what man isn't troubled by difficult circumstances

or plagued with fears of what the future may hold? But Jesus is no mere man; He's the Son of God! He is the Messiah! He's the One who calmed the raging sea and rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith. He's the One who calmly walked through angry crowds led by men who sought His death. He's the One who will shortly tell His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me." (14:1) How can the One who says that now say that His soul is troubled? This statement seems inconsistent for Jesus, even out of character.

What was it that Jesus was dreading so much? The arrival of the Greeks had set His mind to thinking of His coming crucifixion and the fact that He would soon bear the sins of the world. He had rejoiced in the coming of the Greeks as He saw them as a precursor to all the many Gentiles who would eventually come to Him as well. But, their coming also pointed to His death because only a crucified Savior could atone for sin and it was this process of atonement that necessitated a judicial separation from the Father as He bore the sins of His people on the cross. The crucifixion involved an illegal arrest and trial, physical beating, excruciating scourging and very painful physical death. It wasn't the physical death Jesus was dreading, it was this very necessary, yet never before experienced spiritual death.

How could the One who had never known one second of unbroken fellowship with his Father peacefully contemplate the approaching hour when He would be made sin for us and the eternal fellowship He has with the Father would be broken? It's impossible for us to fathom that question, let alone offer an answer because as humans, by nature, we are born separated from the Father by our sin. It is our natural state. In fact, even after we are saved and joined with the Father in fellowship, it still takes us time to begin to understand what that blessed fellowship fully entails.

Jesus didn't have that problem. He was fully cognizant of both the blessing and value of intimate fellowship with the Father. This is why the Gospels all agree in telling us that as the cross grew near, Jesus began to be troubled and deeply distressed (Mk 14:33). He had declared to His disciples that He had a baptism to be baptized with and He was distressed until it was accomplished (Lk 14:50). In the garden, He prayed 3 times that the cup He was about to drink might pass from Him (be taken away). When He concludes His prayer with, "Not what I will, but what You will" it didn't mean He had succumbed to some fatalistic inevitability. It meant that in spite of the

fact that the death He faced was the greatest of all horrors, He was still determined to embrace it fully in fulfillment of God's plan for our salvation.

Note: His rhetorical question is "What shall I say?" not "What shall I choose?" There is no question whether He will do the Father's will or not. In spite of the depth of His soul's trouble, there is still a strength or resolve to everything He says. There's no hint of pulling back or changing course. Why? Because He knows that this was the very reason He came to earth in the first place: not to heal the sick or feed the hungry but to die for the sins of the world. It's clear there's a strong resolve in Jesus that will see Him through this struggle but what is the nature of this resolve?

28- Jesus is resolved to die, but why? We know that He is determined to die for our salvation, to save us, but that's not what He gives as His chief reason for dying. The chief end of His life is to glorify God! So, although the death He faces has its horrors, He will not shrink from following whatever way the Father chooses to have Jesus glorify Him.

Did the Father glorify Himself through Jesus' death? Yes He did. But, not only would His name be glorified, there was also a special voice from heaven announcing that it had already been so and that it would be so again.

God's name had already been glorified by Jesus in the past. Where? At His birth. The incarnation is the greatest of all mysteries, that the great and holy God of the universe should take up the cause of His sinful, rebellious creation by becoming one of them, becoming like them so that they might become like Himself. It was on the occasion of His birth that the angels rightly sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

God was also glorified during the years of quiet ministry in Nazareth. Think of it; the One who once ruled angels now learned to do a humble carpenter's work, to know poverty, to be a friend of sinners, to be despised and rejected by those who considered themselves more important than Him. Naturally, the Father was glorified by Jesus' public ministry. In fact, this is the 3rd time a voice has come from heaven in relation to the Lord's ministry: 1st at His baptism, 2nd at His transfiguration and now here, just prior to His death. In each case, the Father declares His divine approval of both the submission and work of the Son at each critical junction of His public

ministry.

Looking beyond the cross to the morning of His resurrection and we will see there the glory that was yet to come. Jesus had been crucified. To many, the dream was over. The disciples were scattering. But then the great name of God is glorified again as the Father breaks the bands of death that bind His Son and sends Jesus forth to empower His weak disciples to the task of world missions. Soon many will believe, and in this God is glorified. One day, Jesus will return to earth in glory to judge the living and the dead and establish His millennial kingdom and the Father will also be glorified in this. In fact, the same angels that sang at the birth of the Savior will then sing, "Blessing and honor and glory and power, be to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever!" (Rev 5:13b) What a glorious day that will be, not just for the Father and for Jesus but for His people too for we will share in His glory!

29-30- These 2 verses present us with quite a conundrum: the people standing by heard the voice from heaven but were perplexed by it. But, the most perplexing thing is that Jesus tells them that the voice was for their own benefit, not His. If the voice from heaven was primarily intended for the crowd, why did they not understand it? Could it be that they lacked the spiritual perception to recognize the voice of God? Given that this is more often the case than not; the question still stands: if the voice was for their sakes and they couldn't understand it, what good was it, really?

The voice was good for them in 2 ways. 1) It provided assurance to Jesus who was about to die for their sins. 2) They heard Jesus pray and they heard a sound from heaven in response to that prayer. This should have convinced them that Jesus was in touch with the Father. Thus, this voice from heaven would be of the greatest value to those individuals that followed Jesus the closest, not physically but spiritually. Physical proximity to Jesus was never any guarantee to spiritual perception (Judas, religious leaders). Spiritual perception only comes through a spiritual affinity with Jesus Christ and this perception grows to the degree that your affinity (kinship) with Jesus grows. Thus, those who's hearts were closest to Jesus could recognize the significance of this heavenly voice, even if they lacked the spiritual perception to understand it fully.

31-33- Jesus goes on to identify 2 important consequences of His upcoming

death. First, the cross represents the judgment of the world, or more precisely, the culture of this world. The world will condemn itself by its treatment of Jesus. It's the culture of this world that stubbornly resists God and hates Jesus and His disciples. Yet, we must never forget that the world that rejects Jesus is the very same world that God so loves.

If the world is judged by the cross, then so is its ruler. The death of Jesus on the cross would seem like a victory for Satan, it looked like the triumph of evil. But in fact, it was the source of the world's greatest good and as such, it represents the defeat of Satan and of his world system. Satan is a defeated enemy for every believer. As we serve the Lord we overcome the wicked one, destroying his kingdom one heart at a time. One day, Satan will be cast out of God's presence permanently and eventually he will be judged and imprisoned forever. All this will be accomplished by the power of the cross. The cross outwardly appeared to be Satan's ultimate triumph but it was his utter defeat.

The second consequence of the cross is that it will draw sinners to Jesus. Think about what this statement means: nothing or no one has ever attracted men and women like Jesus Christ. What draws people together today: movies, concerts, political rallies, sporting events? All these attract large numbers of people but even if they were combined in one total, they would be dwarfed by the number of people worshipping Jesus Christ on a given Sunday.

How did Jesus become so attractive? By His being lifted up from the earth! This verb has a double meaning. It can refer to a literal elevation (raised off the ground) or exaltation (in rank or honor). While it is true that we should strive to lift Jesus up in our conversations and lifestyle, that is not the primary meaning of the phrase in this context. Clearly, Jesus was referring to His crucifixion (33). It's the crucified Christ alone that attracts a lost humanity. It's the Jesus of Calvary who draws. It's the Christ whose blood was shed and whose body was broken. It's the Christ who gave Himself in the place of sinners so that He might bear in Himself the proper and justified wrath of God. Only the crucified Christ draws men and women for only the crucified Christ reveals the great love of almighty God and provides that Savior whom we so desperately need.

What does the crucified Christ promise to do? Draw people. This speaks to

the great need of sinners: they need to be drawn to Jesus. All are separated from Jesus, which means they are separated from everything that is good and need a Savior. We should also make the distinction that people are drawn to Christ, not driven. You cannot coerce people into coming to Christ. You can't argue them, pressure them or even frighten them into His kingdom. That doesn't stop a lot of well meaning but poorly instructed Christian from trying to do so. They beat up sinners with the law or with the coming judgment – all of which are true and have their rightful place in evangelism. But, many more people have been won to Christ by the sweet draw of His love than have ever been won by the fear of His judgment.

What does the Word say? I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their necks. I stooped and fed them. ([Hosea 11:4](#)) Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance. ([Rom 2:4](#)) How gentle is the drawing power of the crucified Savior! How sweet, gracious, quiet and effective it truly is!

Who does the crucified Christ promise to draw? Everyone! This doesn't imply a universal salvation: everyone who ever lived will come to Christ and be saved. Neither the Bible nor personal experience agrees with that. This means that all types of people – from every race, nation and level of life – will come to Him; all people without distinction. The history of the church has born this truth out. The Gospel has been carried to every corner of this world; it has been declared to every level of society and there's been a positive response from every area. Kings and criminals; old adults and young children; the highly intelligent and the not-so-intelligent; from every nation, race, language and people group; they've turned to Jesus as the One who can cleanse from sin and lead them in the way everlasting.

Our text tells us that the soul of Jesus was troubled. Is your soul ever troubled (distressed)? Is it likely to be troubled in the future? What should we do in difficult circumstances? What do we do when relatives die, sickness strikes, lose our job, enemies abuse us or friends misunderstand us? What should we do?

We learn from the Master who breathed this prayer when His soul was troubled: "Father, glorify Your name." In other words, if I must lose my health, glorify Your name by my sickness. If I must lose my wealth, glorify

Your name by my poverty. If I must lose my good name, glorify Your name by my humiliation. If I must lose my life, glorify Your name by my death and send the resurrection. How is this attitude possible to attain? The power is found in this prayer!

Father! Stress is relieved; trouble is transformed when we can truthfully address God as our Father. When we're lost in the midst of difficult circumstances, if we will only get a glimpse of our heavenly Father, the circumstance may remain the same but there's a sense in which they're entirely changed, for we're not lost anymore, we see our Father

Glorify Your name! what a blessing it is to be able to say these words and mean them! The difficulty is that we often try to substitute my for Your and mean "my name," or at least, "Your name and my name together." We want God to be glorified, but not at our expense or in a way that is not what we would choose personally. Here's the thing: God doesn't expect us to be comfortable, but He does expect us to be conformable. In fact, if you are a Christian, God has predestined you to be conformed to the image of His Son ([Rom 8:29](#)). If we are looking for comfortable lives then we will protect our plans and desires at all costs. But, if we want to be conformed to the image of Christ, we will yield our lives to the Father and submit to whatever circumstances He allows into our lives in order to conform us.

The Apostle Paul had discovered both the blessing and the power of this prayer and he applied it personally ([Phil 1:20](#)). Think of Paul's life – stoned and left for dead, wrongfully imprisoned, illegally beaten – all this was from people who didn't even know him. People he was trying to bring the Gospel to. Just one of these would have caused any self-respecting western believer to give up and go into hiding. Not Paul. He was arrested in Jerusalem on false charges, held for 2 years until he appealed to Caesar in Rome. The journey there fraught with trouble: storm at sea, shipwreck, stranded on Malta, snake bit. He eventually made it to Rome, incarcerated but with some liberty. Later, that liberty was withdrawn and in time, the Christians in Rome forgot his whereabouts. In the end, Paul was executed for his faith. These were the circumstances of Paul's life. Yet, in spite of them, Paul rejoiced that God would be glorified in him whether by his life or by his death. Can we say the same? True blessing and strength are found by those who truly can. 😊