

Sunday Celebration (July 19, 2009)  
"Dying to Live"

**John 12:20-28**

## 1. The Defining of the Substitutionary and Sacrificial work of the Christ

**John 12:12-21** .... The Context/Opportunity for this Statement—

**John 12:23-24** ..... Jesus Statement will now Clarify the Nature of His KINGSHIP and His KINGDOM

*To gaze at Christ in history and not see THIS, is to MISUNDERSTAND EVERYTHING about Him!!* .... We are standing at the center of the Bible and of God's self-revelation in the Whole of Scripture— the Substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ

“ Let us carefully mark here the immense importance which our Lord attaches to His death. Nothing can explain this but the old foundation-doctrine of the Bible, that Christ's sacrificial death on the cross is the only Satisfaction and Atonement for the sin of the world. A passage like this can never be thoroughly explained by those who regard Christ's death as nothing more than a martyrdom or an example of self-denial. It was something far greater and more important than this. It was the dying of a corn of wheat, in order that out of its death should spring up an enormous spiritual harvest. Christ's vicarious death is the world's life.” J.C. Ryle, “John”, vol 2, p. 383

ISLAM's Belief @ the Death of Christ –

“ The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins, which is rejected by Islam” (Qur'an — Translation & Commentary, Islamic Propagation Centre International, A. Yusuf Ali, 1946, p. 230).

### Popular Spirituality's View of the Death of Christ

“One of the mistakes that human beings make is believing that there is only one way. ... There are many paths to what you call God and his path might be something else. ... There couldn't possibly be just one way. ... What if you lived in some part of the planet and you've never heard the name of Jesus, yet you lived with a loving heart, you lived as Jesus would have had you to live, you lived for the same purpose that Jesus came to the planet to teach us all, but you are in some remote part of the earth and you never heard the name of Jesus— you cannot get to heaven, you think? (Transcribed from the Oprah Winfrey Show)

***For What Purpose Did Jesus Come to Earth?***— Consider what ½ the Gospel of John is Taken up with!!

***Consider the Ramification of Jesus NOT Dying— Jn 12:24*** .... One Lone SEED .... The ONLY Man in Heaven would have been Jesus Christ!!

***What Other "One" in Human History lived a life and went through a death that had vital significance for all of humanity?***

1 John 2:1-3 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Acts 4:12 “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”

Jn 14:6 “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

## **2. The Life principle highlighted that is also true for us**

– w/o question this principle is intended for Personal APPLICATION (not just a “Jesus Thing”)

### **v. 24 ... The Illustration of a Grain of Wheat**

***What's a Grain of Wheat? ....***

## v. 25 ... The Counter-intuitive Nature of the Christian Life

### **The Kingdom of God is COUNTER-INTUITIVE:**

**Mark 10:43-44** But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.

**Luke 14:11** For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

**Mark 10:21** And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing; go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven ; and come, follow me."

### **Jn 12:24-25**

“ Unless there is death, the vast possibilities inside us will not be released. We will shrivel and remain alone. We must die. Those who are beginning the Christian life or are awakening to their spiritual potential must learn that we live by dying. ...If your life is stagnant, if your spiritual potential is going unrealized, it may well be that you need to die, to lay down your life and be released.” **Kent Hughes**, “John”, p. 301

## v. 26 ... Following & Serving

“ Faith and obedience are the leading marks of real followers, and will always be seen in true believing Christians. ...Christianity like this, receives little praise from man. It is too thorough, too decided, too strong, too real. To serve Christ in name and form is easy work, and satisfies most people; but to follow Him in faith and life demands more trouble than the generality of men will take about their souls. ...Yet to him that followeth, let us never forget, the Lord Jesus holds out abundant encouragement: “Where I am,” He declares, “there also shall my servant be: if any man serve Me, him will my Father honour.” **J.C. Ryle**, “John”, vol 2, p. 378-379

*The great benefit of following Jesus — You are where he is...  
would you really want to be anywhere else?*

**v. 27 ... Do you want to reconsider following? — Death will make you do that.**

***"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say?"***

***- "What shall I say (pray)? ... How often are our prayers filled with prayers of "Self-preservation" rather than God glorification.***

***.... Godly People Pray THE 'UNCLE' PRAYER— But at the end of the Day, Godly People Want the Will of God for the Glory of God in Their Lives!!***

***"The verb [troubled] is a strong one, and signifies revulsion, horror, anxiety, agitation."*** D.A. Carson, "John", p. 440

***"George Muller exercised a wide influence for God. When someone asked him, "What has been the secret of your life?" Muller hung his head and said, "There was a day when I died." Then he bent lower and said, "Died to George Muller, his opinions, preferences, tastes, and will; died to the world, its approval or censure; died to the approval or blame even of brethren or friends."*** Kent Hughes, "John", p. 301

***What's the Remedy to this Troubled Soul?***

- 1. Embrace Death as the Doorway to Abundant Life**  
– The Destiny of a Seed is NOT to exist alone, but to Entrust Itself to Germination

... this is the ***"Dark Night in the SOIL"***

- 2. Decide that THE Presiding Agenda of Your Life is to FOLLOW CHRIST... no matter what!**