**The Glory of the Cross**

Based on [John 12: 20-43](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Jn12.20-43)

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Good Friday

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On the face of it, the bloody crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ looks evil. We see a man who had done nothing wrong suffer and die on account of the envy of lesser men. But the crucifixion of Christ is not evil. It is something that is to be gloried in through faith.

In a little while we will listen to the whole account of the betrayal, suffering, death and burial of Jesus Christ according to St. John. Before that, we will consider from the gospel some what Jesus himself has to say about his impending crucifixion before it happens…he calls it the hour of his glory.

**First, Jesus says “The Hour has come for the son of man to be glorified”**

The dictionary defines glory as “high renown or honour won by notable achievements; a matter of great pride and magnificence.” To say that the gruesome and bloody death is something magnificent and to be proud of seems foolish. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men. By God’s own reckoning, we know the cross to be the most heroic and magnificent act ever accomplished by a man.

“7For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Jesus Christ’s death is not just any death…it is a death that counts for us. He carried our sins in his body to the cross for God to punish them there. The world is know to glory in its shame; but the shame of the cross is the glory of heaven.

**Second, unless a Grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies it remains alone, but if it dies it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.**

Whoever hates their life in the world keeps it. The wisdom of men is to fight your way to the top in this life, to take the first seat at the table. But the servant doesn’t glorify himself, but entrusts his life to his heavenly father. He doesn’t seek his reward in this life, but waits to receive the crown of eternal life.

So Jesus prays that he would be spared this suffering…nobody wants to suffer and Christ wouldn’t be human if he did. But he places his control under the control of God’s providence and plan for the salvation of the world.

**Third, Wherever i am there my servant will be**

Jesus shows that he is not the only one called to surrender his life as a sacrifice to God…only that he is the first, and because his death and life were perfect, he prepared a way for us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices as well.

For it is no great gift to offer God a life of sin and filth and shame. But by his own perfect death and obedience, Jesus made us holy and worthy to offer ourselves to God. This is our baptism…that through the washing of water and the word he offers us up to the Father without wrinkle or blemish or any such stain.

**Fourth, My Soul is troubled; yet what should I say? Father save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name**

Again Jesus would not be human if he were not troubled in his very soul about what he is to face. It might be tempting for us to think that suffering torture, death and hell would be easier for him as a righteous man and as God, but not so. He was tested like us in every way only without sin. And because he was without sin his suffering was all the more.

As sinners we hide from God in our guilt. Adam and eve hid and made loincloths. Isaiah said depart from me for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of unclean people. Peter said, depart from me lord for I am a sinful man.

And yet Jesus is the eternal Son of God, was with his Father in love from eternity, before the world was made and shared in his Glory. But now on the cross he will cry out “my God, My God why have you forsaken me”. The darkness across the earth is the judgement and wrath of God, hell itself, the turning away of the grace and favour of the Father from the Son.

And this is not for us to weep for Jesus, as he tells us to weep for ourselves. It is to have you consider the width, and the breadth and the depth of the love of God for sinners in the torturous and bloody image of the cross, which is not to be called evil, but which he calls the glorfication of His Father’s name.