

THE VICTORIES OF THE CROSS

JOHN 12:12-36

By Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Consider some of the most important events in our nation's history:
 - i. The signing of the Declaration of Independence which sparked the Revolutionary War.
 - ii. The ratification of the Constitution.
 - iii. The secession of the south from the north, which led to the Civil War.
 - iv. The stock market crash of 1929.
 - v. The bombing of Pearl Harbor, which plunged us into WWII.
 - vi. The passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964.
 - vii. LBJ's Great Society of 1964 which has led to the destruction of the black family.
 - viii. The legalization of abortion in 1973.
 - ix. The attack on the World Trade Towers on 9/11, which led to America's longest war in Afghanistan, lasting 20 years and claiming 170,000 lives.
 - x. The Coronavirus pandemic of 2020.
2. All of these events had huge ripple effects not only on our country, but on the entire world. But as consequential as these events were, none of them comes close to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is the most important and impactful event in all of human history.
3. The cross itself has become the most famous and popular symbol in all of human history – more popular than the Nike Swoosh, or the McDonald's golden arches.
4. The cross is the central reason Christ came to earth. **Mark 10:45** "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
5. Think about what Christianity teaches: The death of God. And then it goes on to call that event the gospel – or good news!
6. How in the world can you describe the death of Christ by crucifixion as good news? Because through the cross God achieved a great victory.
7. Our story picks up on Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Christ's death on the following Friday. Why is it called Palm Sunday? We'll see.

II. TEXT AND COMMENTARY: JOHN 12:12-36

1. 12 The next day, when the large crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 they took palm branches and went out to meet him. They kept shouting:
 2. "Hosanna!
 3. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,—the King of Israel!"
4. 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written:

5. 15 Do not be afraid,
6. Daughter Zion. Look, your King is coming,
7. sitting on a donkey's colt.,
8. 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first. However, when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.
9. 17 Meanwhile, the crowd, which had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify. 18 This is also why the crowd met him, because they heard he had done this sign. 19 Then the Pharisees said to one another, "You see? You've accomplished nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!"
10. 20 Now some Greeks were among those who went up to worship at the festival. 21 So they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and requested of him, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." 22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.
11. 23 Jesus replied to them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. 25 The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Where I am, there my servant also will be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.
12. 27 "Now my soul is troubled. What should I say—Father, save me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name.",
13. Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."
14. 29 The crowd standing there heard it and said it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."
15. 30 Jesus responded, "This voice came, not for me, but for you. 31 Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 As for me, if I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself." 33 He said this to indicate what kind of death he was about to die.
16. 34 Then the crowd replied to him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah will remain forever. So how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"
17. 35 Jesus answered, "The light will be with you only a little longer. Walk while you have the light so that darkness doesn't overtake you. The one who walks in darkness doesn't know where he's going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become children of light." Jesus said this, then went away and hid from them.
18. In this text I want you to see five victories of the cross.

III. FIVE VICTORIES OF THE CROSS

1. The Son of Man was glorified.

- i. **John 12:23-24** 23 Jesus replied to them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit.
- ii. Christ predicted that the cross would bring Him glory. To glorify is to praise, or to worship, or to honor.
- iii. How was Christ glorified by the cross?
 - 1. He was glorified in heaven after His resurrection and ascension, when He was exalted to the right hand of God the Father.
 - a. **Ephesians 1:20-23** “20 He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens—21 far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given,, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he subjected everything under his feet, and appointed him as head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.”
 - b. **MacArthur Study Bible** After Jesus accomplished His cross work and was raised from the dead, He was exalted to the place of prominence, honor, majesty, authority, and power (cf. Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20, 21; Phil. 2:9–11; Heb. 1:3–9; 6:20; 8:1; 12:2).
 - c. **NKJV Study Bible** Being at the right hand of God means that Christ is in a position of power and authority.
 - 2. He was glorified on earth as people all over the world turned to Him in faith.
 - a. The cross made Jesus Christ the most famous man on earth.
 - b. The cross made Jesus Christ the most loved man on earth.
 - c. The cross led billions of people all over the world to worship Jesus Christ.
 - d. Today Christianity is the world’s largest religion, with over two billion followers.
 - e. **Colossians 1:5-6** “You have already heard about this hope in the word of truth, the gospel 6 that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world.”

2. The Father was glorified.

- i. **John 12:27-28** “27 “Now my soul is troubled. What should I say—Father, save me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”
- ii. Jesus predicted that the cross would glorify the Father.

- iii. How did the cross glorify the Father? Reconciliation. Before the cross, the world was alienated and hostile to God; separated by sin. But through the cross, the world (all those who believe) was reconciled to God.
 - 1. **Romans 5:10** “For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.”
- iv. Through the cross, sinners all over the world became worshipers.
 - 1. **Ephesians 1:5-6** “5 He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One.”
- v. Because of the cross, billions of people praised God for sending His Son.
- vi. J. I. Packer notes that the gospel solved “the deepest of all human problems, the problem of man’s relation with his Maker.”

3. The world was judged.

- i. **John 12:31** “Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out.”
- ii. Jesus said that the cross would be the judgment of this world.
- iii. He wasn’t referring to the final judgment when Christ returns, because He said “Now.”
- iv. What judgment was He referring to?
 - v. On the cross, God’s wrath was poured out on Christ for the sins of the world.
- vi. **Isaiah 53:6**
 We all went astray like sheep;
 we all have turned to our own way;
 and the LORD has punished him
 for the iniquity of us all.
- vii. On the cross, Christ made atonement for the sins of the whole world.
- viii. God created us for a relationship with Himself, but our sins separate us from God. So, God sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our place for our sins. Now, if we will put our faith in Jesus, we can be forgiven and reconciled to God.
- ix. **MacArthur Study Bible** “He, who personally never sinned and had no sin nature, took the place of sinners. In so doing, Christ satisfied God’s just penalty for sin required by the law and opened the way to God for all who repentantly believe.”
- x. **J. I. Packer** “Our sins have been punished; the wheel of retribution has turned; judgment has been inflicted for our ungodliness – but on Jesus, the lamb of God, standing in our place.”
- xi. **John Stott** “Evangelical Christians believe that in and through Christ crucified God substituted himself for us and bore our sins, dying in our place the death

we deserved to die, in order that we might be restored to his favor and adopted in his family.”

- xii. Does this mean all are saved? No. We must appropriate God’s forgiveness through faith.
- xiii. **John 3:16** “For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”
- xiv. It reminds me of the very first Passover (Ex 11-12). The Passover was one of the major Jewish festivals. The very first Passover occurred in Egypt. The Jews were in slavery to the Egyptians. God sent Moses to deliver them, but Pharaoh refused. So, God attacked Egypt with nine different plagues. He turned water into blood; He infested the land with frogs, gnats, and flies. He killed the livestock with disease. He inflicted the people and animals with boils. He sent terrible hail that killed people and animals, and destroyed the crops. He sent locusts that ate the remainder of the crops. He inflicted the land with a terrifying darkness so that you could not see the person next to you. But after all this, Pharaoh still refused to release the Jews. So, God brought on the last plague, the Passover. He sent the angel of death to every home in Egypt to kill every firstborn son and animal. But before the angel began his night of terror, God gave the Jews a way of salvation. Each family was to sacrifice a lamb and put its blood on the doorposts. That night, if the angel of death saw the blood of the lamb, he would pass over that house, sparing them his wrath. Salvation was offered to the Jews, but they had to appropriate that salvation with the blood of the lamb. In the same way, salvation is offered to everyone, but it is only received by those believe in the blood of the lamb – the cross of Jesus Christ.

4. The ruler of this world was cast out.

- i. **John 12:31** “Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out.”
- ii. Who is the ruler of this world? Satan (Jn 14:30).
- iii. In what way was Satan cast out? Scripture teaches two things about Satan:
 - 1. He is still highly active and dangerous to believers. 1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.”
 - 2. The cross of Christ disarmed the devil in some way.
 - a. **1 John 3:8** “The Son of God was revealed for this purpose: to destroy the devil’s works.”
 - b. **Colossians 2:15** “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; he triumphed over them in him.”
 - c. John 12:31 describes this disarming as a casting out. We see this also in Rev 12:9.

d. How was the devil disarmed?

- i. Revelation 20:1-3 says that after the death and resurrection of Christ, the devil was bound so that he could no longer deceive the nations.
- ii. Before the cross, all through human history the entire world, except for Israel, was under the control and deception of the devil. They did not have God's word. The devil had his way. But after the cross, Christ sent out His disciples into all the world to turn them from the power of Satan to God.
- iii. Listen to the mission that Christ gave to Paul to go to the Gentiles (the non-Jewish world). **Acts 26:17-18** "I am sending you to them to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among those who are sanctified by faith in me."
- iv. Because of the cross, Satan was cast out of his position as deceiver of the nations.
- v. He can still deceive, but as the gospel is preached and people believe, He loses His control over them. As more and more people turn to Jesus, He cannot rule and deceive them.

5. Christ drew all people to Himself.

- i. **John 12:32-33** "32 As for me, if I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to myself." 33 He said this to indicate what kind of death he was about to die."
- ii. What did Jesus mean by him being "lifted up"? Verse 33 tells us. He was talking about his death. When he was lifted up on the cross and punished for our sins, He drew all people to Himself.
- iii. After Christ's death, He sent His disciples into all the world to make disciples of all nations – Jew and Gentile.
- iv. **Matthew 28:18-19** 18 Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."
- v. The Jewish leaders assumed that if they killed Jesus, they would put an end to His influence and movement. In fact, when they killed Jesus they multiplied His influence and movement. After Christ's death, the gospel had spread and churches were started all over the Roman empire and beyond within thirty years. And today, it is the largest religion in the world.
- vi. I love the wording of verse 32. "I will draw all people to myself." Christ invites the entire world to be saved. He wants you to be saved. He doesn't

want to punish you, but to save you. He doesn't want to hurt you, but to bless you. Even at the end of this conversation, Christ invited His listeners to believe in Him.

- vii. **John 12:36** "While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become children of light."
- viii. Calvinists say that God only draws the elect; He only wants to save the elect. No. Christ died for the sins of the entire world, and He draws the entire world into a saving relationship with Himself. God wants none to perish but all to come to repentance. God wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. All you have to do is to believe.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. The cross was not a tragic accident.
 - i. Jesus Christ came to earth to die for our sins (Mk 10:45). Look again at **John 12:27** "Now my soul is troubled. What should I say—Father, save me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour."
 - ii. He knew He was going to be betrayed, and even the identity of His betrayer (Mt 17:22). He knew He was going to die. He predicted His death on numerous occasions, even in more detail than in this passage (Mt 16:21).
 - iii. His life was not taken from Him; He willingly gave it up for us. **Galatians 2:20** "I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
2. The cross is our victory. It is the victory of God over sin, Satan and death.
3. But to benefit from the cross, we must put our faith in Jesus Christ.