

“Who is Jesus?”: Worthy of Death
John 12:20-26

John 12:20 ¶ Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks.

John 12:21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

John 12:22 Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, *“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.*

John 12:24 *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*

John 12:25 *Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.*

John 12:26 *If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.*

Introduction:

- Careful to clarify who the Greeks are. Hellenistic Jews? No, John would have called them that and v.19 gives light.
- Why is this group significant?

Come and See (vv.20-22)

- A) The Greeks (v.20)
- a. Hellenistic Jews or simply spiritual seeker Greeks
 - b. Out of **verse 19**
 - c. Proximity to 2nd Temple Cleansing: **Mark 11:15-17, 15** *And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. 16* *And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. 17* *And he was teaching them and saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for*

all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.”

- B) The Quest (v.21-22)
- a. Approached Philip (only Greek name among the disciples)
 - b. To see
 - c. To see what?
- C) Application: What’s your quest? What are you looking for?

If Anyone Wants to See, they must Die (vv.23-26)

- A) The Death of Christ in the world (vv.23-24)
- a. Time is up
 - i. Up until now “hour” had meant something in the future (v.27)
 - ii. Incomplete until His task is fulfilled. To see Him at all the cross must be in full view.
 - b. Purpose is Glorification
 - i. *Doxazomai*
 - ii. “To think, suppose or be on an opinion” (used by Plato, Sophocles, Xenophon) – no where like this in scriptures
 - iii. Honoring and exalting to rightful position of the Son (v.27 – must go through the cross)
 - iv. The Sons glorifying of Himself, thereby glorifying the Father, is through suffering and death
 - c. Evidence is fruit-bearing
 - i. Subordinate to the Father’s will
 - ii. Grain of wheat produces wheat (agrarian society)
 - iii. **John 1:11-13**, *“11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

- iv. **John 10:14-18**, *“14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”*
- v. **Col.1:18-20**, *“18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”*

B) The Death of man to the world (v.25)

- a. Loving life is tantamount to idolatry
- b. Hating life in this world is a mark of the true believer (you have to die to this world to be a Christian)
 - i. Semitic language of preference
 - ii. Contrast of present world and time with the kingdom of God and eternity
 - iii. Must die to this world through the death of Christ, being resurrected as a citizen of the Kingdom of God, where Christ is the center of the universe...not you.

C) The Nature of eternal Life (v.26)

- a. Following and service are distinct, as if there is a way to serve without following. As well, there is interconnectivity. So, could it be said that you can serve and NOT follow, BUT you cannot follow and NOT serve?
 - i. There is even something here of evaluation.

- ii. If one serves so that the greatest satisfaction is the glorification of the Son, then it appears that one is a true follower.
- iii. However, if one serves and there is any level of self-honoring, that person would appear to either be a false-follower, or in a state of confusion
 - 1. **Matthew 6:2**, *“Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.”*
 - 2. **2 Peter 1:8-9**, *“8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.”*

- b. Eternal life finds its satisfaction in the presence of Christ
- c. Christ is the object – the Father’s aim
 - i. Exchange, not additive
 - ii. **Psalms 37:4**, *“Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”*

- D) Application: Do you love this world more than Jesus? What version of heaven will satisfy you?
- **John Piper**, *“Christ did not die to forgive sinners who go on treasuring anything above seeing and savoring God. And people who would be happy in heaven if Christ were not there, will not be there. The gospel is not a way to get people to heaven; it is a way to get people to God. It’s a way of overcoming every obstacle to everlasting joy in God. If we don’t want God above all things, we have not been converted by the gospel.”*