

Lifting Up Jesus

John 12:32

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." NKJV

Jesus is here talking about the type of death He would die. That is that He would be crucified on a cross the form of capital punishment used by the Romans when they wanted to make a spectacle of the person they were putting to death.

But there is another sense that I want to use this text today. That is us lifting up Jesus, not on a cross but in our lives. Lifting Him up to our families and even to our own selves. I remember back when I was in high school and the coach would try to stir us up before the game. He had a phrase he would use. "Talk it up boys." He would say. The idea we were to get each other excited about the up coming game. Well I think that we ought to talk it up, not over a game, after all that's why they call it a game. But we ought to talk up Jesus to one another. To rehearse in our thoughts our wonderful Savior.

The children of Israel in the wilderness saw miracle after miracle but only grumbled and complained about their present condition. They saw the presence of God in the cloud by day and the pillar of fire at night but they got used to them. They became bored with the manna that God rained down from heaven to feed them. And in this day I have never seen a more bored group of people than Christians. They are bored with reading the words of life from the God's holy book. They are bored with hearing how the Son of God came down to earth in live and sacrificed Himself for their sorry souls.

So we are going to take the next several weeks to talk it up. Rather to talk Jesus up, to lift Him up. We are going to do this by asking a series of questions.

- I. Why should we lift up Jesus?
 - A. He is our hero - our Savior.
 1. The man born blind was made to see.
 - a. He could not say enough good things about Jesus.
 - b. And when he finally met Jesus look at what He did.
 - c. John 9:38 Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.
 2. The demon possessed man from the Gadarenes
 - a. Mark 5:1 Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. 2 And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, 4 because he had often

been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. 6 When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. 7 And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me." 8 For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!" 9 Then He asked him, "What is your name?" And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many." 10 Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. 11 Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. 12 So all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, that we may enter them." 13 And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea. 14 So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. 15 Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. 16 And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine. 17 Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region. 18 And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. 19 However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you." 20 And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

- b. Has Jesus done any less for you and me?
- c. We were lost not knowing which way to go when Jesus found us and lovingly embraced us and changed our lives.

B. He is the only hope for those around us.

- 1. Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
- 2. You might say but I think I am saved or they are saved.
 - a. That is like saying I think that I am married.
 - b. Now 99.9% of those who are married know it for sure.

- c. So if you only think you are saved there is a great possibility you are not saved.
3. Or that is like saying I was in a burning building and I think the fireman saved me.
 - a. Now if you were in a burning building and the fireman came in and carried you to safety, he saved you, no doubts.
 4. Or it is like saying I think I met the president.
 - a. You would say well did you or didn't you?
 - b. Once years and years ago when Nancy and I were dating, right after we got of the Ark. We went to the Heart of Illinois Fair. While we were there we went to see the show at the grandstand and they had a well know female performer that evening. Half way through the performance Nancy leaned over and said "She keeps looking right at you." Well I had noticed that as well. We were very close to the front and it did appear that way. But even after all these years she has never tried to contact me. I doubt she was looking at me.
 - c. Many people get close to Jesus but never have an life changing encounter with Him.
 - d. When I met Jesus, it changed my life. I would never be perfect in this life, but I would never again be what I was before He found me.
 5. You will never see Jesus as someone's only hope until you know that He was your only hope.
 6. It is our responsibility, He told us to lift Him up to others.
 - a. Jesus said, "As you are going proclaim the good news to everyone."
 - b. In our lives we have a responsibility to tell others that Jesus is their hope, their only hope for life, the abundant life.
 7. But some will say, that is the preacher's job and it is, but no more that it is yours.
 - a. Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" **And let him who hears say, "Come!"** And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.
 - b. Acts 1: 8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

- c. The “you” in the passage refers to even you and me.
- d. The apostles themselves would never be able to be witnesses to the whole world but their followers would be.

II. How should we lift up Jesus?

A. Tell His story

- 1. God has always reminded His people to tell of His wondrous works.
- 2. Ps 9:1 I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works.
- 3. Ps 66:5 Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.
- 4. Ps 71:17 O God, You have taught me from my youth; And to this day I declare Your wondrous works.
- 5. Remember what Jesus said to the demoniac, “ *Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.*”

B. Live according to His will.

- 1. One man said we should preach the gospel to everyone and even use words if necessary.
- 2. Another man responded what you are doing speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you are saying.
- 3. We live what we believe. It is that simple. If we proclaim Jesus as Lord of our lives then He must be Lord of our lives.
- 4. A shoe salesman who has lousy shoes is a poor salesman.
- 5. A car salesman that drives a junk care is a poor salesman.
- 6. A clothing salesman who dresses like a bum is a poor salesman.
- 7. And a Christian who lives like the devil is at best a poor Christian or maybe lost and doesn’t know it.

III. Where should we lift up Jesus?

- A. To ourselves.
- B. At home
- C. To others.

I hope you will be back next week as we try to put some meat on these bones. Or as they say find out where the rubber meets the road.