

Jesus Lifted Up

John 8:28-30

28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. 29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." 30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. NKJV

This is the second of three times in John's gospel that Jesus uses this term "lifted up" in reference to His death. But in each of these instances there is a little difference in the context.

- I. John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
 - A. Jesus is here speaking to Nicodemus about his eternal soul.
 1. Nicodemus was a religious ruler of the Jews.
 2. He would not come to Jesus in the light of day lest someone catch him doing so. But he came to Jesus at night.
 3. And Jesus opens to him that wonderful passage in Numbers 21
 - a. Num 21:7-9; 7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. 8 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." 9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. NKJV
 - b. This was not just a convenient passage but God designed those circumstances to give us a illustration of Christ in the Old Testament.
 - c. The Old Testament is filled with hundreds of these types, or figures of Christ in His person, or ministry.
 - B. In John 3 we find several things about Jesus being lifted up.
 1. It was because of our sins that He would be lifted up.
 - a. God loves us and provided a way for us to be with Him even though we were sinful and unworthy.
 2. It was for the clearing away, or atonement of our sins that He was lifted up.

- a. Rom 3:22-26; For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. NKJV
 - 3. It was the exclusive way chosen by God to reconcile lost humanity to Himself.
 - a. Notice Jesus says “must be lifted up”
 - b. There was no other way.
 - c. Ac 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."
 - C. In this we also find personal responsibility.
 - 1. Just as in Numbers 21, only those who exercise faith in Jesus would not perish but have everlasting life.
 - 2. Those who will not turn to Jesus will die because of their sin.
 - 3. It is universal both in its application and efficacy.
 - a. Everyone needs Jesus.
 - b. Anyone can turn to Him.
 - c. But only those who do turn will have everlasting life.
- II. The other place Jesus uses this term is in John 12
- A. John 12:31-33; 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die. NKJV
 - B. John himself very plainly tells us that Jesus says this to show the manner of death He will undergo.
 - C. But this passage also displays the attractiveness of the cross.
 - 1. What even in human history could take the most vile and cruel form of death, that is the cross and turn it into the most recognizable symbol on earth today.
 - 2. The story of Jesus death for sin on that cross is one of the most heart wrenching and wonderful stories ever told.

3. How that Jesus, God's only begotten Son, could, would, gladly lay down His life for rebels, sinners, those who hold Him at enmity.
 4. What a tremendous appeal that has, how it draws people to Him.
- D. But this passage also speaks of the universality of Jesus.
1. Jesus didn't just die for the Jews.
 2. He didn't die for those who have it all together, the Nicodemuses of this world.
 3. He died for the prostitute, the gang member, the murderer, the persecutor of Christianity.
 4. He died for the poor and the rich old miser, for the beautiful and the ugly, for the intelligent and the ignorant.
 5. His message is for everyone you know.
 6. There is no one who because of their past action, or their present position, or their place in society that is beyond the reach of the message of Jesus.
- III. The last passage is the one we deal with this morning.
- A. 28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.
- B. Notice who it is that is responsible for His death.
1. He says "You" speaking to them directly and specifically.
 2. Those religious Jewish leaders who conspired in darkness and deceit to put Him to death.
- C. But notice also that He tells them that their problem is not ignorance but sin.
1. When they have put Him to death and when He is raised from the dead and received into heaven, then they will know that all that He said concerning Himself was true.
 2. But yet they will not turn, or repent.
 3. They will stiffen their necks and determine that no matter what they will turn to Him.
 4. This is nothing more that sin and rebellion against God.
- D. Often times today people think that the reason people do not come to Jesus is that they are ignorant of Him.
1. And this may be true, it does not have to be.

2. Many stiffen their necks and refuse to submit to God, they will live their lives the way they want.
 3. It is just sin.
- E. Still many only give Him lip service.
1. They talk the talk but they do not walk the walk.
 2. That would involve giving in to the claims of Jesus on their life and they will not do that.
 3. Anyone can sing a song of praise or a praise song.
 4. Anyone can attend Sunday School and worship service.
 5. But to give your life, your language, your desires, your temper, your emotions, your rights, their lusts, and their dreams over to Him they will not do.
 6. You see the essence of sin is everything that is outside of the will of God.
- F. I think that there are a great deal of people in and out of the church who know who Jesus really is but they will not come to Him that they might have life.
1. They prefer darkness rather than light.
 2. The only cure is to abandon self and rush to Jesus and take all of Him and give Him all of yourself.
 3. 30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

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