

# JESUS APPROACHED AS KING: THE MISUNDERSTOOD MESSIAH

## JOHN 12:20–36

### *Introduction*

Man misunderstands the Messiah. There are four misunderstandings in particular.

- I. Some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus (vv. 20-22).
- II. Misunderstanding 1: Jesus' glory (vv. 23-26).
- III. Misunderstanding 2: Jesus' cause (vv. 27-30).
- IV. Misunderstanding 3: the world (vv. 31-33).
- V. Misunderstanding 4: the Messiah (the Light of the world) (vv. 34-36).

### *Another Outline John 12:20–36*

The Glory and Power of the Cross.

1. Some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus (vv. 20-22).
2. The cross is the glory of the Messiah (v. 23).
3. The cross brings forth fruit or produces many seeds (v. 24).
4. The cross demands man's death to self (vv. 25-26).
  - a. Man must lose his life to bear eternal life.
  - b. Man must serve and follow Jesus to be assured of Jesus' presence and God's honour.
5. The cross fulfils Jesus' cause (v. 27).
6. The cross glorifies God's name (vv. 28-30).
7. The cross judges the world - the prince of the world (v. 31).
8. The cross draws all men (vv. 32-33).
9. The cross reveals the true Messiah (vv. 34-36).

### *Another Outline John 12:20–36*

There are really seven pictures here. (1) A kernel of wheat (v. 24). (2) A life lost (v. 25). (3) A servant (v. 26). (4) A troubled heart (vv. 27-30). (5) A prince driven out (v. 31). (6) The cross (vv. 32-33). (7) A light extinguished (vv. 34-36).

### *I. John 12:20–22 Greeks...Would See Jesus*

Some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus. The scene was as follows. Jesus had just been hailed as the coming King and Messiah by teeming thousands of people: "The whole world has gone after Him" (Jn. 12:19). Some Greek pilgrims who had come to attend the Passover Feast wished to see this Jesus who was being proclaimed King. In the

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author's mind, these Greeks represented the Gentile world, all the God-fearing people of the world who would see Jesus.

## II. *John 12:23–26 The Glory of Jesus Christ*

The first misunderstanding is the Messiah's glory. The Greeks had just seen Jesus *glorified* as Messiah by teeming thousands. It was as if the world were going after Him. They wanted to be part of the movement, so they requested an interview with Him. What Jesus did was try to correct the misunderstood idea of the Messiah held by the world. He wanted to prepare both the Greeks and those standing around (the whole world) for His death. He wanted to teach that the way to glory is not through triumph and praise, not through domination and subjugation. The way to glory is through death to self and through service to God and man. Jesus did two things.

1. Jesus said that His hour had come: the Son of Man was now to be glorified. His hour, of course, referred to His death.

Note that Jesus revealed His death by using the picture of a kernel of wheat. As stated, Jesus said that He would now be glorified, but His glory was not to be the glory of an earthly potentate. His glory was to be the glory of the cross. It was to be by death that He was to gain the allegiance of men and be exalted as King.

=> God would exalt Him as King because He had done exactly what God wished: He died for the sins of the whole world. (Jn. 10:17-18)

=> Men would become His subjects because He had died for them and given them an eternal inheritance with God the Father.

The picture of the wheat can be simply stated: before the glory — before fruit or seeds can be borne — death is a necessity. Jesus must die before He can be enthroned as King and bear the fruit of subjects and a kingdom. (Jn. 13:31-32.)

**Thought 1.** The glory of Christ is the glory of the cross.

- 1) It is the cross that stirs God to exalt His dear Son above every name that is named.

**Rom 14:9** *For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.*

**Phil 2:8-11** *And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Col 1:14, 18** *In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the first-born from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*

**Heb 1:8-9** *But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”*

**Heb 2:9** *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

**1 Pet 2:24-25** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

**1 Pet 3:18, 22** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand — with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

**Isa 53:12** *Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

2) It is the cross that stirs men to offer themselves as living sacrifices to God’s dear Son (in appreciation and love for saving them).

**Rom 6:10-11** *The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

**Rom 14:8-9** *If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.*

**2 Cor 5:14-15** *For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

**1 Cor 6:20** *You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.*

**Gal 2:20** *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

**Eph 5:2** *And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

**Titus 2:14** *Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

**1 John 3:16** *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.*

2. Jesus also said that man's hour had now come. Man must do the same as He did.
  - a. Man must lose his life. If he does, he will gain eternal life. What did Jesus mean by this unusual statement? Very simply, the person who *abandons* this life and world, who *sacrifices and gives* all that he is and has for Christ, will save his life. But the person who *keeps* his life and what he has and *seeks* more and more of this life, will lose his life completely and eternally.

The person who "saves his life"...

- who seeks to avoid aging and death and denies Christ — will lose his life eternally.
- who seeks to make his life more and more comfortable and easy and secure (beyond the necessary) and neglects Christ — will lose his life eternally.
- who seeks to gain wealth and power and fame by compromising Christ — will lose his life eternally.
- who seeks the excitement and stimulation of this world and ignores Christ — will lose his life eternally.

As said above, the person who loses his life for Christ and sacrifices all he is and has for Christ saves his life and saves it eternally. The person who keeps his life and what he has for himself will lose his life and lose it eternally. The call of Christ is just what He says — a life of denial that takes up the cross and follows in His steps.

**Jer 5:25** *Your wrongdoings have kept these away; your sins have deprived you of good.*

**Mark 8:36** *"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"*

**Luke 6:49** *"But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."*

**Luke 9:23** *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*

**Rom 8:13** *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*

**Gal 5:24** *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.*

- b. Man must serve and follow Jesus. The man who does is assured...
      - of Jesus' presence: "Where I am, my servant also will be."
      - of the Father's (God's) honour. The Father will honour any person who honours His Son — His only Son whom He loves with His whole Being.

**Mark 10:43-44** *“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.”*

**Mat 19:27-29** *Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?” Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.”*

**John 8:12** *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

**Exo 23:25** *Worship the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.*

### JOHN 12:23–24 THE HOUR OF JESUS CHRIST

*Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”*

**John 12: 23–24**

The phrase “the hour” or “my hour” or “my time” is a constant symbol of Jesus’ death. “The hour” or “the time” refers to all the events of the cross and all the trouble and sufferings surrounding the cross. Note two facts.

1. “The hour” is a set, fixed time in the purpose of God.

⇒ Jesus said, “The hour has come” (Jn. 12:23-24, 27; 13:1; 17:1; Mt. 26:18, 45; Mk. 14:41).

⇒ He had said some time before, “My *time* has not yet come” (Jn. 2:4; see 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20).

The hour of Jesus was inevitable: a definite period of time, a set of events, a number of experiences that He had to face and go through. As He said, He must die in order to bring forth fruit (v. 24).

2. The hour was to have a definite beginning. There was a set time for the trouble to begin (v. 27), a set time for Him to begin suffering for the sins of the world. There was a fixed hour when He was to begin suffering the pain and anguish, the agitation and disturbance, the pressure and weight, the strain and stress of having to be separated from God on behalf of man (Mt. 20:18; 27:46-49). □

### III. *John 12:27–30 The Supreme Purpose of Jesus' Life*

The second misunderstanding is the Messiah's cause or purpose. Note six points.

1. Jesus was experiencing a *troubled* heart. *Troubled* (*tetaraktai*) means agitated, pressured, heavy, weighed down, strained, stressed, disturbed.
2. The reason His heart was so troubled was that He was about to face the great cause for which He had come into the world. His hour was at hand, staring Him in the face; the terrible sufferings were now beginning (See *The Hour*, Jn. 12:23-24). Note two things.
  - a. His supreme purpose was to face the hour God had set for Him: He was to die. He had come to die, and to die was the supreme cause of His life.
  - b. His supreme obedience. Imagine the terrible sufferings of the hour. Should He pray, "Father save me from this hour?" He could not, for He had come to die. He must obey God, and to obey God was the supreme act of His life (Jn. 10:17-18).
3. Jesus prayed for the glory of God. He prayed for the Father to glorify His own name. This is significant. It shows a complete selflessness on the part of Jesus. It shows that the primary concern of Jesus was to complete His purpose and cause on earth, which was to glorify God by doing exactly what God wanted. How was God glorified? By Jesus' obedience. God was glorified in the same way a superior is honoured and respected. His Word was carried out and obeyed.

Note: the verb "*glorify*" is in the Greek aorist tense which points to a single act or event which would glorify God (v. 28). The single act concerned the cross. Jesus was asking His Father to glorify His own name through the cross.

- a. God would be glorified in the cross by the *supreme act of obedience* on the part of Jesus. It was God's will for Jesus to die for the sins of men. By dying, Jesus would show that God is the supreme Being of the universe. God is the One who is to be honoured and respected and obeyed. He would thereby be glorified.

**Mat 26:39** *Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."*

**John 10:17-18** *"The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life - only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."*

**Acts 2:23** *This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

**Eph 5:2** *And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

**Heb 10:5-7, 10** *Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, ‘Here I am — it is written about me in the scroll — I have come to do your will, O God.’”... And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

- b. God would be glorified in the cross by *men’s seeing the love of God* in the cross. God gave His only Son to die *for* men that they might not perish but have eternal life. Some men would see and believe this glorious truth; therefore, they would bow down, surrendering their whole beings to God. They would begin to follow and obey His will, honouring and praising Him for all He had done and was doing for them. The name of God would thereby be glorified by the cross.
4. God accepted and approved Jesus’ prayer. Note that the approval was audible. God actually spoke from heaven, saying that He had glorified His name and that He would glorify it again. Note three things.
  - a. Jesus prayed according to God’s will: “Glorify [honour] your name” (Mt. 6:9). Therefore, God answered His prayer.

**Thought 1.** God will answer any prayer that is according to His will (1 Jn. 5:14-15). This stresses the importance of knowing God’s will. Studying God’s Word is the only way to know the will of God.

- b. God accepted Jesus’ prayer. This means He accepted Jesus’ death on behalf of man. We can rest assured that we are delivered from death if we believe in Jesus (Jn. 5:24).
- c. God will glorify His name in the future. He will keep His Word and fulfil all His promises. We can rest assured of the promises of God.
5. The people standing around were confused. Some thought the voice was merely thunder; others thought that an angel had spoken to Jesus.
6. Jesus plainly told the people that a voice had spoken. It had spoken for their sakes in order to help them believe that He was the Son of God.

The point is this. By the thousands, people had just welcomed Jesus in the triumphal entry, welcomed Him as their earthly King and Messiah, the One who was to bring heaven and Utopia to earth (Jn. 8:21-24). Jesus had to correct the misunderstanding of His cause. He had come not to rule as an earthly King for man; He had come to die for man. God’s concern was not just for the seventy years of a man’s life; God’s concern was to save man eternally.

**John 3:16-17** *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

**John 10:10** “*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*”

**John 10:15** “*Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep.*”

**1 Pet 2:24** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

#### **IV. John 12:31–33 The State of the World; Corruption**

The third misunderstanding concerns the world. The world is not what it should be. It is not what it was created to be: perfect and permanent. The world was perfect in its distant past: it was created perfectly, just as it should be. However, man misunderstands the world. He ignores and neglects *the fact* that the world...

- is not perfect; is not in its original state or even close to it; is not what it should be; is not in the condition for which it was meant.
- is not permanent as it is; will not always be here; was not always here.
- is to be changed and recreated into a new heavens and earth just as God intended.

Standing there, the people had welcomed Jesus in the triumphal entry, thinking He was going to set up a worldly kingdom upon this *present earth*. They thought in terms of the physical earth, in terms of worldly kingdoms and material wealth and power. Jesus had to correct their misconception. He had to show them that God’s concern was not for man and his world to exist for just a brief span of time, but for eternity.

What Jesus said was an alarming revelation. Note the phenomenal claim in the word “now.” He said “*Now*” it is I — my being lifted up, my cross and death — that would cause these things to happen.

1. Jesus said that this world is to be judged (See *World*, Jn. 12:31).
2. Jesus said that the world is ruled by an alien power (See *Satan*, Jn. 12:31).
3. Jesus said that both the world and Satan would be conquered by the cross, by His death (See *Cross*, Jn. 12:32).

#### **JOHN 12:31 JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD, MAN AND CORRUPTION**

*Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. **John 12: 31***



The world has to be judged...

- judged as being imperfect
- judged as being in some state other than what it should be
- judged as being short of God's glory and of God's will

If the world is ever to be perfected, it has to be judged as imperfect. God has to judge the world as less than what He wills. Once the world is judged as defective and imperfect...

- then it can be condemned and destroyed
- then it can be recreated in a perfect form and state of being

This is exactly what Scripture teaches. Scripture says three things about the world having to be judged and recreated in order to be perfected.

1. The earth itself and the heavenly bodies above have to be judged. Why? Because they are imperfect; they have the seed of corruption within. The earth and the world are *running down*, wasting away, failing and dying. Eventually, even if the world were allowed to run long enough, the earth could not sustain life. The Bible says the earth...

- has to be judged because it is not perfect.
- has to be made perfect by being recreated and put into a permanent state. (2 Pet. 2:3-4, 8-13.)

2. Nature itself, the animal and vegetative life of the earth, has to be judged. (Note: this fact is closely aligned to point one above. It is separated only in an attempt to simplify the discussion and to help in understanding the teaching of Scripture.) Nature is imperfect; it has the seed of corruption within. Nature is often beautiful in its sunsets, green pastures, and animal life. But nature is also destructive in its storms, earthquakes, fires, and struggle for survival. The beautiful mockingbird sitting in a tree can be singing its song, and in a moment's time turn into a savage by attacking the worm. Nature is not perfect, not what it should be. It is short of God's glory and short of what God wills it to be. God's will is for a *nature* in which the lion lies down with the lamb, a nature in which all things are at peace and without corruption. In its present condition, nature....

- despite its beauty, can be savage
- despite its peace, can be stormy
- despite its producing good, can produce bad
- despite its being right, can be evil
- despite its enticements, can destroy
- despite its nourishment, can starve

The Bible says that nature has to be judged because it is not perfect. It has to be made perfect, that is, recreated and put into a permanent and perfect state.

*Rom. 8:19-22 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

3. Man (and his world system) has to be judged. Man is imperfect; he has the seed of corruption within. Man lies, steals, cheats, and kills. Man — every man, no matter who he is — has many good moments but he also has many bad moments. Moods, feelings, thoughts, weaknesses of both body and mind — can cause man to come ever so short. In addition man ages; he wastes away and dies — and nothing can stop the process. Man is short of God's glory; he is not perfect; therefore, he must be judged. He has to be recreated and made into a perfect creature; he has to be given a perfect and permanent body.

*1 Cor 15:42-44 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.*

*1 Cor 15:49-54 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."*

It is important to note why the seed of corruption is in the world. The world was not corrupted by its own will or act. It was corrupted because of sin (Rom. 8:20). The sin of man brought corruption into the world. As soon as man sinned...

- the world was no longer perfect. It was contaminated, polluted, dirtied, corrupted.
- the seed of corruption, of wasting away, deteriorating, decaying and dying was planted in the world.
- the results of sin fell upon the world as well as falling upon man.

The world had been made for man, for man's dwelling place and enjoyment (Gen. 1:1-3:24). And God gave man a choice: if man chose perfection, his world would remain perfect just as God had created it; but if man chose sin and evil and death, his world would become imperfect, full of sin and evil and death. Therefore, when man sinned and became corrupted, he plunged the world into corruption. All creation became as man, just as man had chosen.

As stated, the world and its physical dimension of being were made for man; therefore, it was bound to suffer the very same fate as man. God had so ordained it. Therefore, when man is saved and delivered from sin and corruption, his world will also share the deliverance of man. The world will be saved and delivered from sin and corruption. There is to be a glorious day of redemption, a redemption both for man and his world. God will give all believers a redeemed and perfected world in which to live. As God declares, "I am making everything new" (Rev. 21:5)

*2 Pet 3:3-4, 8-13 First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." ...But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. □*

## JOHN 12:31 SATAN

Jesus said the world is ruled by an alien prince. The world is not ruled by God; it is ruled by Satan. The Bible says three significant things.

1. Satan is the ruler and the prince, that is, the power of the world in all its evil and corruption (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2.)
2. The sin and evil of the world prove the world is ruled by an alien prince. God is not the author of sin. God *does not* tempt men, not with evil (Jas. 1:13). God is not the Father of sin and evil, of destruction and devastation. God does not do such things. The father of such corruption is the devil.

3. Satan is now *driven out* by the cross of Christ. Note the words *driven out* (ekblethesetai exo, future passive of ekballo which means a sure fact *lying in the future*). The words mean to drive out of, to drive from or forth, to drive *clean out* (exo) of a place. Satan in all his power, rule and reign is driven out by the death of Christ. His power, rule and reign over lives is now broken.

a. Satan's power *to charge men with sin* is now "driven out." Men now have the power to escape the penalty of sin. Christ took the sins of men upon Himself and paid the penalty for their sin. He died for the sins of the world.

**1 Pet 2:24** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

**Rom 8:33** *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.*

b. Satan's power *to cause death* is now "driven out." Men no longer have to die. Christ died for man, became man's substitute in death.

**Heb 2:14-15** *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

c. Satan's power *to cause men to be separated from God* is now "driven out." Men no longer have to go to hell. Christ was separated from God for man (Mt. 27:46-49). Man can now live forever with God.

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

**Rom 8:11** *And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.*

d. Satan's power *to enslave men* with the habits of sin and shame is now "driven out." By His death, Christ made it possible for man to be freed from sin. The believer, cleansed by the blood of Christ, becomes a holy temple unto God, a temple fit for the presence and power of God's Spirit. Men can now conquer the enslaving habits of sin by the power of God's Spirit.

**1 Cor 6:19-20** *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.*

**1 John 4:4** *You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

**Thought 1.** *Jesus Christ has destroyed and triumphed over the power of Satan.*  
( See Cross, Jn 12:32).

**John 14:30** *“I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me.”*

**Col 1:13-14** *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

**Col 2:15** *And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

**1 John 3:8** *He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. □*

## JOHN 12:32 CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST

*“But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.”*  
**John 12: 32**

The words “lifted up” refer to the cross of Christ, to His death upon the cross. Jesus said that once He is “lifted up,” He will draw all men to Himself. Note two points.

1. Note why the cross of Christ attracts men. It was the cross...
  - that delivered men from sin, death, and hell.
  - that made it possible for men to live abundantly and eternally.
  - that gave to men the presence and power of God’s Spirit to guide and care for them day by day.
2. Note how the cross of Christ gives so much to man. Very simply stated, Jesus died *for man* on the cross. When a man believes that Jesus died *for him*, God takes that man’s belief and *counts* it as righteousness. God simply counts the man as perfect. The man is not righteous, nowhere close to being perfect. The man, God, and everyone else knows he is not perfect. But the man honours God’s Son by believing in Him; therefore, God honours the man.

The point to see is that God will do anything for the person who truly honours His Son. God loves His Son so much that He is willing to do anything for anyone who honours Jesus. If a man honours Jesus by believing and following Jesus, God will take that man’s faith and...

- count his faith as righteousness
- deliver him from sin and from death
- give him both abundant and eternal life (Jn. 10:10)
- place the Holy Spirit and His power within the man to help him live day by day (1 Cor. 6:19-20; Rom. 8:1-39; Gal. 5:22-23).

The point is this: it is the cross of Christ that breaks the power of Satan in the world. It is the cross of Christ that “drives out” Satan: his power, his rule, and his reign. Man, by believing that Christ died for him, can now be counted righteous and delivered from the power of Satan, from the evil power that entices him to sin and that causes him to die and face the judgment of God. Man can now know the power of God, the power that freely forgives him and gives him life forever. Man can now experience the marvellous grace of God. □

#### ***V. John 12:34–36 Jesus Christ, the Light of the World***

The fourth misunderstanding concerns the Messiah (the Light). Note: the people clearly understood that Jesus was speaking of death, but it was this that confused them. They had just acknowledged Him to be the Messiah, and they had always understood the Messiah was to live forever (Psa. 89:36; 110:4; Isa. 9:7; Dan. 7:14). Was He really the Messiah? Could they be mistaken? Was the Son of Man someone else? Jesus answered two things.

1. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the Light of the world (See *Believers*, Light, Jn. 12:35-36; *Jesus the Light*, 8:12). But He stressed a critical point. The Light was to be with them for only a little while longer; the Light was to be extinguished.
2. Jesus pointed out the twofold need of man.
  - a. Man must walk in the Light *while* he has light. If the Light was to be extinguished, it would not always be present for men to see. And once men lost the Light two things would happen.
    - => Darkness would overtake and overcome men.
    - => Men would not know where they were going. They would be groping and stumbling, falling and dooming themselves to an eternity of darkness.
  - b. Man must believe in the Light. If men believed, something significant would happen. They would become children (huioi, sons) of the Light.
    - => Believe or *trust* (pisteuete) is continuous action.
    - => *Become* (genesthe) is a once-for-all act, a personal experience that happens all at once.

A man who truly sees Jesus Christ as the Light of the world believes and trusts and continues to believe and trust. And the very moment his heart leaps toward Christ in

belief and trust, he becomes a child of the Light, a child of God Himself. The man sees the Light and begins to walk in the Light, living the kind of life he should.

**John 1:4** *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

**John 8:12** *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

**Eph 5:14** *For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." ■*

### JOHN 08:12 JESUS THE LIGHT

*When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **John 08:12***

Jesus is said to be the *Light of men* (Jn. 1:4) and the *Light of the world* (Jn. 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). It is possible for the Light, Jesus Himself, to be in men (Jn. 11:10; see Col. 1:27) and for men to become children of Light (See *Light, Believers*, Jn. 12:34-36).

App-arently, Jesus used the word *light* often. John uses the word twenty-four times. What is meant by calling Jesus the Light?

1. Jesus, the Light, is light by nature. Light is what He is within Himself, within His being. His nature, His essence, His character. Scripture says...
  - that "God is Light" (1 Jn. 1:5);
  - that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15);
  - therefore, "Jesus is Light." He is "the Light of the world."
2. Jesus, the Light, tells us that He is holy, righteous and pure. Light is the symbol of purity and holiness. Light means the absence of darkness and blindness; it has no spots of darkness or blackness, nor of sin and shame.
3. Jesus, the Light, reveals. His light shows clearly the nature, the meaning, and the destiny of all things. His light shines in, spots, opens up, identifies, illuminates, and shows things as they really are. The light of Jesus Christ shows the truth about the world and man and God. The light of Jesus Christ reveals that He loves and cares for man and wants man to love and care for Him.
4. Jesus, the Light, guides. His light allows a man to walk out of darkness. Man no longer has to grope, grasp, and stumble about trying to find his way through life. The path of life can now be clearly seen.

5. Jesus, the Light, does away with darkness and with chaos. His light routs, wipes out, strips away and erases the darkness. The empty chaos of creation was routed by the light given by God (Gen. 1:3). Jesus Christ is the Light that can save man from chaos (Jn. 14:1, 17; 12:46; 16:33).

Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Light of the world at the great Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:2). The very first ceremony of the Feast holds great significance for Jesus' claim. It was called "The Illumination of the Temple" and was held in the Court of the Women. The centre of the Court was surrounded by large sections of stadium-like seats. In the open space of the Court sat four huge candelabra. When darkness fell the candelabra were lit, and the elders danced and led the people in singing psalms before the Lord all night. The brilliance and glow from the burning flames of the huge candelabra were said to be so bright that the light could be seen throughout the whole city. It was against this background that Jesus cried out, "I am the Light of the world." □

### JOHN 12:35–36 BELIEVERS, LIGHT

Light is one of the great themes of Scripture.

1. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all (1 Jn. 1:5).
2. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world — the very embodiment of the heavenly light (Jn. 8:12; 9:5).
3. The light of the knowledge of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6).
4. Jesus Christ "gives light to every man" who comes into the world (Jn. 1:9).
5. Believers are said to become "children of light" through belief in the Light, Jesus Christ Himself (Jn. 12:36).
6. Believers have been transferred from the dominion of darkness into the Kingdom of Christ, the inheritance of light (Col. 1:13).
7. Before they come to Christ, believers are not only in darkness but are an embodiment of darkness. But when they come to Christ, believers are placed in the Light and become an embodiment of the Light itself (Eph. 5:8).
8. Believers are the light of the world (Mt. 5:14-16).
9. Believers are to set their light on a lamp stand — to make their light conspicuous (Mt. 5:15).
10. Evil doers shun the light (Jn. 3:20f).
11. The creation of light is a picture of the expulsion of spiritual darkness (Gen. 1:2f). □