

The Gospel of John

Joyously Submitting to the Cross

John 14:28-31

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are continuing in the Gospel of John. Open your Bible, if you will, to the 14th chapter of John, verses 28-31. Jesus is still with His disciples in the upper room, the night before His crucifixion.

He began talking to them in chapter 13 and He will end at the close of chapter 16 by praying that the Father would bring to pass all the things that He has promised. These four chapters are profoundly rich and they are an unparalleled portion of Scripture that we find only in the Gospel of John. This is the legacy of Jesus. These teachings and promises were not only for the eleven disciples, but through them, to all who would ever believe on Him.

Stand and Read Scripture

John 14:28-31 (NASB)

²⁸ You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. ³⁰ I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; ³¹ but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.

Prayer

Jesus is facing His crucifixion. The disciples do not understand the significance of the cross. They are troubled. At this point, all they can see is that, "This thing is about to be over and we have put everything in it – our lives, our hopes, our ambitions, our dreams, our love, our resources...everything. And now He is going to die and leave us?"

Jesus understood the significance of the cross. That is the ultimate reason that He came to this earth. So, although it was a very painful and shameful, the scriptures tell us that He considered it joy to endure the cross.

On our side of the cross we all know why Jesus had to die on the cross. We have the four gospels to give us the narrative about the cross. We get to read the enlightened message from the Holy Spirit leading up to the cross, at the cross, and the forty days after His resurrection up until He ascends into heaven to be with His Father in the book of Acts. Then we have the rest of the New Testament that records the preaching of the apostles and their associates in the early church concerning the cross and the resurrection. So we have a vast amount of historical data about the cross and about the message of the cross.

We understand the plan and purpose of salvation, and what it means to us.

We have communion every Sunday around the Lord's Table to remember His death.

We understand Romans 6:3-4.

Romans 6:3-4 (NASB)

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

We understand that Christ was crucified for us in our place and His righteousness replaced our sinfulness within us. This liberated us from our bondage to sin. He liberated us from the fear of death. He liberated us from eternal punishment. And He set us on a course to heaven.

That is our view on this side of the cross. It is a complete and full view. But put yourself in the place of the 11 disciples, on the other side of the cross with no inspiration from the Holy Spirit, no theology, no preaching by the apostles, no gospels having been written. Theirs was a prophetic faith from the Old Testament. Ours is a historical faith.

Let me share with you four reasons why Jesus could joyously submit Himself to the cross. First it meant that **He would once again be glorified.**

BODY:

I. HE WILL BE GLORIFIED.

John 14:28a (NASB)

²⁸ You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced...

By the way, I have always struggled with what Jesus meant when He said that He must go in order for the Holy Spirit to come. We find it in...

John 16:5-7 (NASB)

⁵ "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

Now I understand. Jesus had to die on the cross and raise from the dead before the Holy Spirit could minister to the disciples the meaning of what had happened. Jesus had told them all in advance as much as He could but they needed to experience His death and resurrection before they could fully understand through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.. They in turn would then write the New Testament that we have today This is the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit that we covered a couple of weeks ago. Even though they did not know why Jesus was to die now, through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, they would know and understand. And they would rejoice with Jesus for what He had accomplished and glorify His name just as the Father had done!

John 14:28b (NASB)

...because I go to the Father,...

Really an amazing statement. This is a reference to His exaltation, “I go to the Father.”

And we know that happened in Acts 1:8 when He ascended into heaven. He had finished the work the Father had given Him to do and He went back to the Father to receive His reward. He went back to where He had eternally existed.

Take a look at His prayer John 17:1.

John 17:1 New (NASB)

17 Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,

He had been living in humiliation for 33 years and now He was ready to finish what He had been sent to do and return to His Father.

John 17:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Obviously, we could never imagine how he felt as He anticipated the return eternal glory which he had set aside for those 33 years. Now he is going back face-to-face with the infinite fellowship of His Father. We can't understand what that means. It is hard for us to grasp what it meant to be separated from the sinless glories of heaven and to be spit on, to be whipped, to be despised, rejected, and then crucified!

Then He makes this statement:

John 14:28c (NASB)

...for the Father is greater than I.

What is that? Philippians 2 has a good explanation of this.

Philippians 2:5-11 (NASB)

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

So, as to His Godhood, He is equal to God. But as to His manhood, He is inferior. If only the disciples could understand that Jesus' humiliation was soon to be over and their salvation would be secure they would have rejoiced with Him.

II. HIS TRUTH WILL BE VALIDATED.

Secondly, His truth will be validated.

John 14:29 (NASB)

²⁹ Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe.

When He told the disciples that He was going to die and rise, they did not believe it. But guess what? But when it happened, it caused them to solidly believe. By telling them before it happened, it validated Him as the One who had told them the truth. Only God can do that!

Remember the Luke's account of the road to Emmaus. Two men were walking to the village of Emmaus. Jesus approached and began travelling with them.

Luke 24:27 (NASB)

²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

When they had approached the village He was asked to stay with them. At the table He took bread and blessed it. It was then that their eyes were opened and they recognized Him and Jesus vanished from their sight.

So they left immediately and returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples and those who were with them what they had experienced.

Luke 24:36-48 (NASB)

³⁶ While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and *said to them, "Peace be to you." ³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰ And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ While they still could not believe *it* because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; ⁴³ and He took it and ate *it* before them.

⁴⁴ Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

Can you imagine what would have happened if He had never told them that He was leaving and the details of His death? They would have been scattered and the Gospel

would never have been proclaimed. But all of a sudden, as these things began to unfold – the death, the resurrection – they began to remember what He had said.

Then the Holy Spirit arrives on the day of Pentecost and begins revealing the significance of His death and resurrection. No doubt validating the many things that Jesus had told them before He left to go to the Father.

Everything that Jesus had said would be confirmed and their meaning revealed. He would be viewed as the Son of God who knows the future in detail. That would empower the disciples for the ministry that lay before them.

III. SATAN WILL BE DEFEATED.

There is a third reality: His enemy will be defeated.

John 14:30a (NASB)

³⁰ I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming...

The ruler of this world is Satan, the god of the age, the ruler of this world, the prince of the power of the air.

Jesus says, “**The ruler of this world is coming.**” He didn’t say Judas is coming; He didn’t say the Sanhedrin are coming; He didn’t say the Romans are coming. They were, but behind them was Satan. Satan was coming.

This was the hour of darkness. This is the hour when God let Satan, who has the power of death, to crucify Christ. Satan was coming at Him with everything.

John 14:30b (NASB)

...and he has nothing in Me;

Why didn’t Satan have any access to Him? Because Jesus could not be tempted to sin. Sin brought death. But Jesus would not experience death by His own sin. When He took on the sins of all who would believe in Him throughout the history of mankind, Satan would bruise His heel. But Jesus would crush Satan's head when He rose from the dead as a perfect sacrifice.

Although Satan is strong, he is no match for God. He obviously does not have **omniscience**, the ability to know everything, or he would never have put Christ on the cross. What seemed to be a victory for him ended up being his ultimate defeat.

IV. HIS LOVE WILL BE DEMONSTRATED.

Then there is one final reality why Christ joyously submitted to the cross: His love will be demonstrated.

John 14:31a (NASB)

³¹ but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me....

This is the only place where He actually says, “**I love the Father.**” And we know He does, but here it is explicit: “I want the world to know I love the Father, so I do exactly as the Father – ” what **(Pause)**“ – commanded Me.”

The Father has commanded the Son to come into the world and be the sacrifice for sin. He is the Father’s chosen lamb to bear the sins of all the people who would ever believe. This is the Father’s will. The Son must submit to that. He must be obedient.

He is obedient, and obedience demonstrates love. “If you love Me you will – ” what **(Pause)** “ – keep My commandments.” And here is the model. I am demonstrating to the entire world that I love the Father by doing exactly as the Father has commanded Me.

CONCLUSION:

Life on earth is hard, but God's retirement plan is out of this world!

The death of Christ on the cross was much more glorious than the disciples could ever have imagined. They, like us, could only “**See in a mirror dimly.**” But when Jesus comes again everything will be much greater than anything we can ever imagine.

It took action of the part of Christ to prove His love and accomplish what He was sent to earth to do. Just like Christ, we also must **joyously submit to the cross.**

Matthew 16:24-27 (NASB)

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. **25** For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. **26** For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and **will then repay every man according to his deeds.**

By submitting to the cross...

- We too will be glorified. We will be given a glorified body and live in the presence of God for eternity.
- The truth will be validated. We will see God face to face and we will understand fully. We will be on the other side of the second coming of Christ.
- Satan will be defeated. He has the power of death, but we do not fear death because we have been made righteous by the blood of Christ.
- Love will be demonstrated. “**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.**” The day is coming when the truth of God's love will be demonstrated and we will no longer have to live by faith. By the grace of God we will have eternal life in His presence! Not for what we have done but for what Christ was willing to do for us.

What an amazing perspective of the cross that the Holy Spirit has revealed to us! I will end the sermon with Jesus' words:

John 14:31b (NASB)

...Get up, let us go from here.

He is Lord.