

The Wednesday Word, January 23, 2019: Christ Lifted Up - Part 1

And if I be lifted up from the earth: I will draw all men unto Me; (see John 12:32-33.)

THREE times in the Gospel of John, Jesus refers to the fact of His being lifted up on the cross. On the first occasion, He spoke about it in a private conversation with Nicodemus. Remember how He said, *"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish; but have eternal life"* (John 3:14-15).

Notice also how He spoke of the necessity of the cross. He said, *"Even so **MUST** the Son of Man be lifted up: "*

Again, in a public discourse: in the Temple, Jesus said. *"When you have lifted up the Son of Man then shall you know that I am He."* (John 8:28).

Then shortly after His triumphal. entry into Jerusalem He said, *"And, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me"* (John 12:32-33).

Those were prophetic words telling of the manner and results of Christ's death.

If He had been put to death by the Jewish authorities as a blasphemer, His death would have been by stoning; But that was not the way the Father intended. He had purposed to inflict the death penalty on the Beloved One, the representative man. The Father was responsible for Christ's death. Neither the Jews nor the Romans killed Jesus.... They were used in that terrible event, but Jesus was executed by the Father. Otherwise, justice would not have been served.

But back to our main theme. One of the things we learn from our text is that the drawing of men to Christ would be absolutely dependent upon His death. The Master said, *"And if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me."* There could have been no 'drawing of men' to Christ for salvation if He had not died upon the cross!

We read in John 6:44, *"No man can come unto Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him."* But what would have been the point of the Father drawing men if Jesus had not died for their sins? There would have been no salvation if Christ had not died! And so, in John 12:24 He says, *"except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides, alone."* Jesus was speaking of Himself. He was that corn of wheat, and unless He had died on the cross, He would have been alone. No one would have been saved.

And so, our Lord here teaches us that it was absolutely necessary for the salvation of His people that He should die upon the cross. He does not say. "If I go on working miracles, my miracles will draw all men unto Me "; or "if I go on living a holy, and godly life I will draw all men unto Me. No! A thousand times No! Here's what He did say. "If I be lifted up (on the cross) I will draw all men unto Me. Thus, our Lord fixes our attention upon His death in order to show that His death was essential for our salvation.

His death upon the cross is the great central truth of the Gospel and except He had died no one would ever have been saved. Therefore, let us hold fast to what has sneeringly been referred to as

"Blood Theology." Without the shedding of blood there is no remission (Hebrews 9:22). God justifies ... freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24). Whom God hath set forth to be a wrath offering through faith in His blood (Romans 3:25).

And that's the Gospel Truth!