

Lifted Up, Part 1

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Preacher: Kevin Smith, Senior Pastor

[0 : 00] So, hear now the word of God. Now is my soul troubled. Jesus speaking. And what shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.

Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again. The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered.

Others said, an angel has spoken to him. Jesus answered, this voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world.

Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

[1 : 05] So the crowd answered him, we have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up?

Who is the Son of Man? So Jesus said to them, the light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light.

Lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.

That is the word of the Lord. Thank you, God. Please be seated. Thank you. Thank you. Praise team, choir. Thank you so much. Amen. Amen. You know, all of us have passions in our life.

Meaning there are things or people that give us life. In European history, we speak of the Middle Ages, the medieval period.

[2 : 21] It ran roughly from 410 A.D. after Rome was destroyed to the 14th century, the beginning of what's called the Renaissance period. During those years, which we also called the Dark Ages, the Gospel of Jesus, meaning we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures alone, to the glory of God alone.

That was the shorthand way the Reformation referred to the work of Christ and the Gospel. But during that time, that Middle Age period, this truth was greatly eclipsed by the Roman Catholic tradition and superstition.

Yet there were those in that history who dared to risk everything to challenge the system, to challenge the empire.

Men like the English scholar John Wycliffe, who translated the Bible into English for the first time. Or Jan Hus, a priest from the University of Prague, who was influenced by Wycliffe, and he spoke against indulgences.

Hus was burned at the stake for his convictions. Then the 16th century came. A hundred years. A hundred years.

[3 : 59] Almost to the year after Jan Hus was burned at the stake. He prophesied when they were burning him. Hus, his last name Hus means goose.

And he told them, you are roasting the goose. But in a hundred years, a gander will come and you will not be able to stop him. Almost to the year, Martin Luther comes and nails his 95 theses to the church door.

He had been greatly influenced by men like Wycliffe and Hus. You see, each of these men found Jesus and his Gospel to be their passion.

And when Jesus and his Gospel is your passion, you will find yourself led into times of great crises with the culture around you.

But Jesus must be lifted up. There's no other option. It was no other option for them, the men I just mentioned. And there's no other option for us.

[5 : 13] Their passion was Jesus. But guess what Jesus' passion was? His passion was the cross and the glory of his Father.

He came to be lifted up. He came to start a spiritual revolution that would shake the world for all time.

His cross was not only salvation. It was a confrontation. A battle.

And it wasn't easy. Doing what you love isn't always easy, is it? Doing God's will isn't always easy either.

We are so blessed when both those things are the same thing. The Father met the Son in his moment when Christ's passion and the will of the Father coincided beautifully.

[6 : 23] And Jesus was victorious. That's the Gospel. Now the Son meets us in our moments too.

Where maybe his will clashes with our passions. In those moments, he can only be lifted up if we trust him in his Gospel.

He will strengthen us to meet those moments of crisis. Faith alone and grace alone is the key.

Can I ask you a question? Are you facing such a moment right now? Are you facing a moment of crises? Are you facing a moment where your desires and the will of God may not be on the same page?

Happy are you if they are. But maybe because we know who we are. Maybe they're not. Jesus wants to be lifted up in you, child of God.

[7 : 44] Will he? Will he be lifted up in your moment? What's your passion? Jesus said in John 20, 12, that the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

That's just before our passage. I'm reviewing because we haven't been here in a while. We're in the last week of our Lord's earthly life. I believe it's still Palm Sunday when he's speaking here.

Death and glory are what are on his mind as we saw way back when, when we studied verses 20 to 26. Jesus is the grain of wheat that must die to bring forth a huge crop of those saved by his death and resurrection.

Again, the verses be above us. Isn't just his mission, it's his passion. The glory of his father and the salvation of his people.

This is what makes Jesus tick. But Jesus is not only glorified on the cross. The father is also. But it's not easy for him.

[8 : 59] And yet there's no other way. Only on this path of death and glory will Jesus be lifted up for our salvation.

Can we watch him closely for a couple weeks maybe? Can we just watch him and see his glory and see what he says to us about our moments?

Which are coming. If they're not on you now, they're coming. So let's just start with point one. That's all we're going to do today. Am I even going to finish point one?

Jesus is confronted with a crisis when lifted up. Verses 27 and 28. Our Lord, he's speaking out loud.

Let me just read it again so you hear it. Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I've come to this hour.

[10 : 05] Father, glorify your name. We're not going to get all the way through that. But I just want you to think about it with me. He's letting us into the inner world of his humanity.

See, as the eternal son, one with the father from all eternity, he knew no anxiety. He knew no distress.

But when he put on our humanity, he put on our emotions and feelings too. He shares some of our weaknesses but not sin.

He says his very soul is troubled. That's a strong word. It's big.

It means things like this. Greatly disturbed. Agitated. Unsettled. In emotional distress.

[11 : 03] It can also speak of, some commentaries say, revulsion and horror. The only other time where that hits him is in the garden of Gethsemane toward the end before he is arrested and taken away.

For the first time, can you dive in with me? For the first time, the eternal son of God feels these feelings.

Can you remember the first time you ever felt agitated or disturbed or emotionally distressed and confused? I bet you can't. You can't remember the first time.

Why? Because our entire lives are full of these kinds of feelings from beginning to end. You came into the world screaming.

You were agitated. Disturbed. Emotionally confused. What happened to my nice home?

[12 : 18] I said we come in. That's the human experience. To be honest, maybe. And I'm going down on a limb here. I don't know for sure.

But I wonder if he felt a little bit of it when Joseph, his father, died. We know Joseph must be dead because he's not mentioned in the gospel later on when Jesus began his ministry.

This is full-blown emotional anguish. Yet Jesus is the greatest being to ever walk the earth. Greatest. Greatest.

There's not even a category that comes close to him. Why is he so distressed? Why is he so disturbed? The cross. The cross.

Yes, the cross would be an agonizing death, certainly. And I'm sure he wasn't excited about that. But the cross was more. The eternal son of God, one with the father for all eternity, holy, holy, holy, is now going to become sin for us and receive the wrath of God we deserve.

[13 : 33] Paul later will put it this way. And this will be on the screen, so listen. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 21. He puts it this way.

For our sake. For our sake. He, the father, made him, Jesus, to be sin who knew no sin.

So that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The father made the son to be sin.

Paul didn't even say he bore our sins. That is true. But his language here is even stronger. He made him sin. I can't get my mind around that.

Don't ask me to explain it. He became that which was antithetical to the holiness of God.

[14 : 31] That is the coming trauma that is making him shudder now.

What can he do? How is he going to deal with this? Notice what he does. He prays to the father. Are you listening, saints? This is us. Here we go.

How are we? He prays to the father. Father, he even reasons with himself as he calls upon the father. He's reasoning with himself. What shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour. But for this hour, this is why I came. He's reasoning, not with the father, with himself. The hour has finally come.

The hour of the cross. The last week of his earthly life. And he's letting us see the impact upon him. The hour waves on him.

[15 : 36] Maybe even scares him a little. How does he work out this anguish? How does he work out this agitation and despair?

Listen, he reminds himself of the purpose for which the father sent him. He finds safety in the will of God.

But for this purpose, this reason, I have come to this hour. He knew who he was. He knew who he was. He knew who he was.

In the eternity past, the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit made a covenant. We call it in theology the covenant of redemption. The three in one agreed that the son would take upon himself the sins of his people to satisfy the holy justice of the father.

He would do it in place of his people. He would take upon their sins. He would take upon their judgment out of love and faithfulness to the father.

[16 : 49] And his sacrifice would be so big that even all of creation would be cleansed. And this begins to steady him.

He's reasoning with himself before the father in prayer. And it steadies him. Do you see it? The dark clouds begin to recede for a moment.

You know how I know? Because he stands against the darkness and says this. Father, glorify thy name. Sometimes you've just got to speak to yourself.

Sometimes you've got to just stand there in the face of the darkness, in the face of the pain and suffering, and just cry out, Father, glorify your name.

It could be a whisper. Or it could be a shout. But it must be the settled reasoning of your heart. This is his life and death.

[17 : 59] The father's glory. My pastor, Dr. Boyce, put it this way. To glorify God is his chief end. Thus, although the death he is to die has his horrors, he will not shrink from following whatever way the father chooses to have the son glorify him.

He must face the cross. In a crisis of faith, we too must go to the father and must come back to God's purposes for our life.

And what is his great purpose? Allow me just to share briefly Romans 8, 29. For those he foreknew, he also predestined.

Listen, here it is. Foreknowing predestines mean that this didn't happen by accident. God planned it for you. To be conformed to the image of his son.

That's your purpose. That's what God wants to do. That's what God is going to do. He is conforming you to the image of his son in order that his son might be the firstborn among many brothers.

[19 : 12] That's ultimately why you're going through something. A crisis. Something that may maybe keep you up at night.

It isn't just for nothing. It isn't just because you made a mistake. Maybe you did. Maybe you even sinned. Or maybe things are just going well with Jesus.

And here you are. It's not by accident. And it's not for nothing. Amen. Amen. Settle in your heart.

What's your passion? Whose glory are you seeking? Get that straight. See, as long as you're seeking your own glory and you're passionate about your own way, this is not going to work out too well for you.

You're going to be, it's going to be, it's going to be crazy. It's going to be a, oh, it's going to be a rough ride. But in the midst of that, if you will remember Jesus, the one whose passion was to glorify the Father in your salvation, the one who gave everything, who saw it, it was difficult, but yet he did not turn away.

[20 : 33] He kept going for the glory of the Father and for your good, your eternal good. If you will, if you remember him and what he has done for you.

Maybe, maybe, just maybe, you can begin to realize that your life is meant to be conformed to his life and that your life is for his glory, not your own.

In that moment, I'm not saying the trial will cease. I'm saying the inner turmoil will cease.

Amen. Dr. Boyce tells a story of a guy named Ralph Kuyper.

Kuyper was born with very bad eyesight and was greatly handicapped during his years of study for the ministry, actually. He fretted about it and I suppose, like Paul, asked many times that the thorn may be taken away from him, you know?

[21 : 55] You've ever prayed that way? One day as he was sitting in the library trying to study, the Holy Spirit began to speak to him. You see, God will speak to you. He will not contradict his word.

He will speak this to you. Well, he'll speak to you and get personal. He said, Kuyper, what is the chief end of man? What is the great purpose of humanity?

Kuyper was a student of theology. He knew the answer to that. He said, that's easy. The first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy it forever.

Hmm. Then the Holy Spirit prompted him again. Kuyper, what is your chief end? Of course!

Is that my chief end? Yes, of course! That's my chief end, of course! Then the Holy Spirit got a bit discourteous. What would you rather have?

[22 : 57] He asked. Perfect eyesight or the privilege of glorifying me? Come on, somebody. That's a question for you to ask right now.

This time, the young student did not answer so quickly. Can I get a moment to think about it? That's what Luther said. That's the deed of forms. Another story.

Finally, he said, there's no comparison. The only possible answer is the privilege of glorifying your name. Then, God spoke to him for the last time through the Spirit of God and said these words, why worry about the means I have chosen to have you glorify it?

I said it'd be short. Why are you worried about the means by which he wants to glorify it?

Why are you debating with him about the means? You said the chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. You believe that. I know you do. But yet, we want to argue with God about the means.

[24 : 23] Huh. You hear me, Leonard? You hear it? You're feeling it, don't you? I'm feeling it. It's better just to say, Lord, help me.

Lord, help me. Glorify your name. Amen. Father, glorify your name. That is our great hope and prayer.

Glorify your name in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Father, Jesus' name.
Amen. Lord,