

Lifted Up, Part 3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 November 2024

Preacher: Kevin Smith, Senior Pastor

[0 : 0 0] John chapter 12 verses 27 to 36 I expect this to be the last time we look at this passage so let's look at it well hear now the word of God Jesus our Lord and Savior is speaking now is my soul troubled 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 angel had 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 so the crowd answered him we've heard from the law that the Christ remains forever how can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up well who is the Son of Man so Jesus answered them the light is among you for a little while longer walk while you have the light let's 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 reading of the word of the living God thanks be to God please be seated hallelujah thank you choir thank you we've been talking about crisis often a crisis involves a confrontation of some sort maybe you're confronted with news of an illness my sister was going through that now maybe you are confronted with solving some problem you may even have to confront people sometimes it involves tough love if not careful it can just be tough the Christian life is a daily confrontation with the forces of spiritual darkness it is the tale of two kingdoms in conflict one of great light and one of deep darkness they are not equal in power for the kingdom of light and its king are far greater than the darkness don't get it twisted we don't do a yin and yang alright yet the conflict is very very real and we who are aware of this conflict are confronted every day with the choices what are our choices to either walk in the light that Jesus the great king is and has won for us or to give in to the darkness of sin despair and hopelessness the only way to victory in these moments is to lift up

Jesus by the grace of God and dependence on the power of his spirit lift up Jesus determined to lift up Jesus it can't be something you happen to feel at the moment to lift up Jesus this has to be a determination of life because if you get the determination at the moment of the crisis you're too late if you're looking for determination when you get in trouble you're too late right now will you determine to lift up Jesus by the grace of God helping you and empowering you it's the only way to victory when we come to our passage again I want something I have said to you keep this in mind John does not record like the other gospels the garden of Gethsemane that's not in the gospel of John he doesn't record that moment when Jesus is sweating great drops of blood before he's arrested he doesn't

John records this moment some scholars call this the little Gethsemane this moment when Jesus is troubled in his soul troubled deeply and so we've been looking at Jesus as he's facing this great crisis as he calls it of being lifted up on the cross and he's teaching us the mindset we need as well in our times of crises we've seen that his great purpose is to glorify the father that's his great purpose that must be ours then we saw how the father confirmed and affirmed him in that purpose he'll do it for us now we come to the place where now he begins to reorder how we see the conflict first of all Jesus conquers when he is lifted up he conquers here again is the confrontation the world saw the cross as passing judgment on Jesus but in reality the cross was God passing judgment on the world 31 to 33 which we are this was the greatest crisis in all of history that moment this moment is the greatest crisis that history hinges on sin is so horrible and so deadly that it will take the sacrifice of the unique son of

God to remedy it and yet it is at this moment as this he is facing the cross that Jesus declares victory he's talking in this by referencing this phrase being lifted up he is once again referencing an Old Testament scenario it comes from Numbers 21 in Numbers 21 and by the way Jesus already mentioned this in John chapter 3 he comes back to when he talked to Nicodemus he comes back that was a private conversation now publicly he's telling the whole crowd this is what my lifting up is about in Numbers 21 there are the people of Israel were once again complaining against Moses their leader and against God God through

[8 : 45] Moses and Aaron was not guiding the Old Testament church in the way they wanted they were tired they were tired of being in the wilderness God had provided them food and water his blessing his presence yet they said in chapter 21 verse 5 this won't be on the screen so listen they said this why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness in other words Kevin Smith translation you're killing the church Moses they say for there is no food and no water listen and we loathe this worthless food this is the people of God talking there's no food and water for us here we're dying there's no sustenance here we're dying and we hate what you're providing worthless food now keep in mind the worthless food was bread from heaven that

God gave them daily called manna manna they're talking and they're called manna worthless food in the new covenant our food is Christ he's the true bread of heaven and his word is it worthless to you maybe maybe they had a different appetite for something better it happens to us too Christ in his word is not enough we want something more and too often what God provides is not enough to us what happened in Numbers 21 what happened there God sent poisonous snakes to bite the people now if you don't like that that's on you that's called the judgment of God the text says many died because sin is a poison that kills after God's discipline that's what that was his discipline fell they repented and begged

Moses to intercede for them before God so God told Moses to make a snake of bronze the snakes that bit them now God's going to take that image and tell Moses to make a bronze one put it on a pole and lift it up anyone who recognizes their need who recognizes they have sinned who humbles themselves and looks up at the snake on the pole gets healed and yet something greater than a bronze snake has come to save us something greater his body will be suspended between earth and heaven lifted up to look to Jesus on the cross trusting in his sacrifice for your sins is life eternal life you are delivered from the poisonous death dealing by the sin and when we the people of God do sin we must again look to him who is lifted up notice the text says Jesus says he will draw people to himself when I am lifted up I will draw not you when I am lifted up I will draw people to myself he said something like this before with the word draw in John 6 44 he said no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day in John 6 the father is doing the drawing now in John 12 the son is doing the drawing and we know that drawing comes by the Holy Spirit what does that tell us that the Holy Trinity draws men and women to the cross it's the work of

God the word drawing understand that word it means to move an object from one area to another in a pulling motion drawing implies that the object is incapable of propelling itself forward drawing implies that the object is even unwilling to come drawing implies resistance but drawing implies that God conquers our resistance come on come on Dr.

[14 : 39] Davis I see you it implies that our resistance is conquered by the cross by the criminal on the cross named Jesus he comes and finds sinners trapped in darkness and he draws them to himself they don't want to come they have them they live in large having a good time life is good party over here and then Jesus shows up boom like the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus boom he didn't ask permission he wasn't being a gentleman he kicked in the door like

John Wayne knock knock poof boom come with me it's like it's like parents help me out it's like parents dragging your child out of a toy store now watch this you're drawing them out this way by promising better toys in the car that's what Jesus does that's what means we born again the Lord wakes he goes into our dead soul he wakes us up we don't want to come so he has to do something to us we have to be born again John 3 when you're born again you can see the kingdom of heaven that's what Jesus said and then you can enter the kingdom of heaven what has to come first you have to be born again first not afterwards first that's how he draws he makes us alive and says

I got something better for you Daniel life in me why will you choose death the prophet said choose life but we can't choose life because we're accustomed to death we like death we don't know it's

really death so Jesus has to come he says when I'm lifted up when I'm lifted up I'm going to draw
hmm hmm hallelujah we become willing when he draws he Jesus becomes in his cross that cross
of death and blood and pain becomes the most beautiful thing you ever saw good friday we don't
walk around looking all dead and depressed we're rejoicing we're rejoicing because that cross as
horrible as it is is the most beautiful reality we've ever seen because on that cross

Jesus is dying for our sins the father the son made a plan and the holy spirit made a plan that that
would be the way to save sinners save people like us who are into ourselves whose world is
surrounded by ourselves who think that we're the center of the universe he had to come save
people like us because we couldn't save ourselves but here's the thing the Jews considered the
cross a curse Deuteronomy 21 if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he's put to
death and you hang him on a tree his body shall not remain all night on the tree but you shall bury
him the same day for a hanged man is cursed by God you shall not defile your land that the
Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance that's why they that's the word of God that's why they
considered crucifixion being hung on a tree it was wood that was slang for that that's why they
considered it a curse God said it was a curse it was capital punishment but here's the thing all of
humanity including us have committed cosmic treason we've committed crimes against divine
goodness which is punishable by death eternal death in hell so we should be on the tree but a
substitute went for us come on somebody the Bible says the soul that sins it shall die the wages of
sin is death but one came one came to be to be a curse for us one came to take our place on the
tree to take the curse the curse that

[20 : 17] God even had it's even better God had pronounced a curse on humanity for the rebellion
in the garden remember in Genesis he pronounces a curse and Jesus goes to the cross to bear
that curse Galatians 3 13 Christ is redeemed Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by
becoming a curse for us for it is written cursed is everyone who is hanged on the tree there it is new
testament understanding of an old testament curse Jesus would bear the curse of God's judgment
he would bear that curse for all those whom God would draw whom God had chosen before the
foundation of the world before the world was even created God set his love and his purpose upon a
people that he would give to his son a people who were hurting and didn't even know it a people
who were hurting and sometimes didn't know it but they thought the hurt was not as bad as it really
was it's worse than not having a father in the home that's pain but your problem goes deeper it's
worse than being on drugs and alcohol and trapped in that addiction cycle that's bad but your
problem goes worse it's worse than being a murderer or rapist or something like that that's bad but
your problem goes worse it's worse than being someone who has to lie to make themselves look
good who's a gossip and likes to talk tell tales because it makes them feel like they in the know it's
worse than that your problem is worse than all of that our problem is we are spiritually dead all of us
are born this way the babies are baptized who are so cute and lovely are spiritually dead they need
life that's why

Christian parents raise their children in the way of the Lord that they might put their faith in Jesus
and have life his weakness on the cross is our life and strength he defeats our sin in his weakness
on the cross our sin and death are conquered by Jesus as he is lifted up we are bought by him for
him and he's selfish he won't share us with anything else story is told of a little boy he crafted a
beautiful sailboat painted it well done he goes out to a lake in his area and it's very large huge lake
he goes out there and he puts the boat in the water and it begins sailing along the side but some
kind of current must have been there because the boat turns out into the center of the lake and
disappears he can't even see it his boat's gone he's destroyed oh my gosh my boat my beautiful
boat gone

I made that all the effort and time I put into that and he loses his boat it's gone one day he's walking
down he's downtown he's in downtown chattanooga visiting family members and he walks by this
window and it's a toy store and in the window is his boat he recognized it because he made it he
goes into the store and says sir that's my boat and the guy says listen that may be true but I paid
good money for that boat I paid a lot of do reme the price tag was high he says I'm sorry I could get
my money back little boy goes out and he gets a paper route and he works at Walmart and he said
he works night and day to save money and he says he goes back into the store with dollar bills all
crumpled up and he goes back in

I got the money I want the boat lays it down on the table and the man says okay boat yours the little
boy goes out the store he holding the boat and he excited he is full of joy he said you belong to me

he said you are twice mine because I made you and now I bought you you are twice mine that's what God has done in Christ at the cross God is coming for us and he said now I made you and now at the cross he says now you are mine you are twice mine twice mine but something else is going on at the cross remember it says it's a confrontation it's a victory it's a confrontation victory over what victory over sin yes victory over sin but Jesus says something else is going on there too his cross will bring judgment on the world and devil he conquers the world and the devil at the cross the king of the world system that system of living and thinking that leaves

God out that system that says you know we don't need no God we are God or there are other gods that God of the Bible oh no he's past that we need new gods God's materialism gods of money money money baby show me the money gods of stuff he who has he who dies with the most toys wins gods of relationships I gotta have you in my life or my life is nothing without you and I will do anything to keep you I will compromise myself I do anything to keep you because I need you you must be in my life that's what the world says Jesus is judging the world and the devil at the cross the system is run by Satan who deceived all of humanity but now at the cross he's being defeated [27 : 31] God promised Eve in the garden that I'm going to give you a descendant and he will crush the serpent's head that's what the cross is doing Jesus as it was at the cross puts his heel on the serpent's head boom the serpent bites him that's his death but that's just the heel he put all his weight on him at the cross darkness and death being defeated at the cross what we're seeing now is a mop up action where the devil he's shaking his death throws he's taking as many as I can with me that's what we're seeing because the cross was God's judgment against the darkness evil and sin

Jesus being lifted on the cross is actually him being exalted that all might see him Jesus is reigning as king on the cross wow and they thought he was just cursed people thought it was foolishness to talk about a crucified God or a crucified savior messiah to the Jews didn't make sense like Paul says in first Corinthians one Jews demand signs Greeks seek wisdom we're like Greeks today and we're actually we're like both today we're Jews and we're like Jews and Greeks people if God would just show me a sign I'll believe if God would just do a miracle I'll believe he exists the Greeks just we want we need wisdom we want psychology we want society we want the world's wisdom to figure out everything we need to know

I don't understand how you I'm an agnostic see or I'm a we want everything but what God provides both Jews and Greeks but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks Christ the power of God and wisdom of God for the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men judgment victory at the cross this reminds us how really how really weak we truly are J.I.

Packer now gone to glory his book weakness is the way tiny book I commend to you to the way of true spiritual strength leading to real fruitfulness in Christian life and service is the humble self distrustful way of consciously recognized weakness in spiritual things the cross reveals not merely the weakness of Christ who was stronger than anything else we've ever seen but it reveals how weak we are that we were so weak that it took that do you believe you're weak do you believe it will you admit how weak you are because there's weakness that leaves room for the Lord's strength like like Paul said Jesus speaking to Paul Paul's hurting he needs help he wants to have this affliction he's experiencing taken away from him so what does he do he prays he says three times

I sought the Lord three times I prayed Lord take this weakness this area that's holding me back that's hurting my life from me but Jesus says to Paul and he says to us my grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness my grace listen in your weakness praying is a good idea when you know you're weak amen is that okay so prayer is good but understand something God may come back to you and say I got you I'm not going to move it you know you're not going to be healed of that in this life no I'm not going to take away that situation you're going to have to go through it but guess what my grace is all you need my my undeserved unearned favor for you my kindness towards you my presence in your life in

[32 : 39] Jesus that's grace given to you you don't deserve it but this is what you've been given you've been drawn remember you you didn't want to come I drew you my grace is all you need that in the midst of your struggle whatever you're going whatever you are facing right now his child of God talking to you Christian who submitted to Jesus his grace is sufficient for you his love for you his presence in your life his favor for you Andrew whatever Cody whatever it is his grace is enough because his grace comes with him by saying my grace is sufficient Jesus is saying I am sufficient I

am enough for you you win if you lose everything else you got me you win if you die with nothing else you die a pauper you die broke busted and disgusted if you have me you win we don't believe it we don't believe it we are here scratching and trying to be strong trying to be perceived that's the world the world says the beautiful people the strong people the people who can tweet well those are the people who are strong the people who got do re mi me people people who got influence and power that's what the world says that's what we want to be we watch those

TV shows lifestyles and the rich and famous and all that stuff on TV because we want to be like them inside we're saying I wish I had that life don't you understand my grace me Jesus is what you need and that's sufficient anything else is gravy I don't know about you but I don't want a pot of gravy at Thanksgiving Daniel if Elise puts out a pot of gravy and some string beans and mashed potatoes and say this is the meal you're going to be a little disappointed you're going to say one thing where's the beef where's the meat Jesus is the meat y'all he's the meal everything else is gravy gravy is good but it's just gravy and you know something too much gravy will make you so sick your crisis is the

Lord's opportunity for victory in you as you lift him up all right okay I'm going to say two things two last points that I'm going to just give them to you Jesus brings confusion when he's lifted up you see verse 34 they didn't understand we've heard from the law that the Christ remains forever how can you say the son of man must be lifted up who is this son of man they're confused because they don't know the word of God they think they do but they don't they missed Isaiah 53 they missed Zechariah they missed all the Psalm 22 they didn't get what God had showed them so they're saying and they must have known what Jesus meant by lifted up they seem to understand that he means the cross he means he's going to die see they understood the cross because many Jews had been crucified by the Romans that was nothing new to them they're saying what do you mean we know from the law the

Messiah is forever he's and you talk about he's going to die what do you mean they didn't recognize Jesus after all he said and done they still were confused about who he is same is true today people are confused about who Jesus is they need somebody like you and me to tell them and the spirit of God has to draw them people are confused about who Jesus is a great revolutionary a great teacher a great radical someone who championed the poor and oppressed champion for women they see them like those things and that's all they see then they don't know they're confused somebody in here has to tell them and last thing Jesus is he confronts us with light when he is lifted up so this is a warning so you got to hear this this is a warning he tells them to walk while they have the light he said

I'm only going to be with you a little while he's talking about his death resurrection and ascension where he will go away and those in that day who reject him will be left in the darkness he's telling them this is today listen believe there's a sense of urgency to the gospel do you hear it sense of urgency here no one knows when their last breath will be today no one knows anything can take you out we don't know we listen saints sorry if you're not walking with Christ I hope you're listening because this is urgent believe in trust in Jesus because you're messed up we know about that because we are we live there we know about being messed up only his life death and resurrection can heal you family we've got to get a sense of urgency about telling people about

[38 : 54] Christ we lay back we're doing friendship evangelism and we're friends for five years and we haven't told him about Jesus yet because we don't see any urgency and yet Jesus is telling us this thing is urgent you don't know when someone's last breath will be now don't get crazy and beat them outside the head with the gospel but you gotta tell them saying I went to a conference recently PCA's global missions conference our mission agency did it the first message that was given to us was on hell because the brother said to us why do you think we're doing what we're doing why mission because people are lost lost and lost doesn't mean you die and well you kind of go to purgatory and you die you kind of just hang out and no lost means you die and you perish you go to hell

I know that's not popular teaching but that's biblical Jesus talked a lot about hell more than anybody else by the way and we don't even mention it fire and brimstone he's preaching fire and brimstone I'm warning people and you we and I all need to be warning people that there will be a judgment and God is the judge and he's holy he's holy no imperfection perfectly morally pure in glorious light and nothing unlike him will stand we gotta be serious about this saints this is our moment I believe this is our moment in the movie Edge of Tomorrow which I love some of you heard it it's called live

die repeat that's the name for it

Tom Cruz and Emily Blunt are in this movie and Tom Cruz plays a major who gets demoted he wasn't combat trained at all his job was in military marketing but he got on the wrong side of somebody and gets demoted John Paxton the late John Paxton plays an amazing role in this movie he's hilarious but he's a brave master sergeant a true warrior his religion was war he was a soldier man from Kentucky he said not from America I'm from Kentucky as he told Cruz is terrified about going into battle and the master sergeant pharaoh seeing his fear gives Cruz a pep talk before the impending battle y'all saw anybody saw the movie remember that pep talk I'm gonna give it to him he says he says battle is the great redeemer it is the fiery crucible in which true heroes are forged the one place where all men are truly equal share the same rank regardless of what kind of parasitic scum they were going in he says private

I envy you for tomorrow you will be baptized born again battle they land in the battlefield on the beach they're fighting the aliens and the team before they jump in the battle the Pharaoh says this remember there's no courage without fear that's a good one y'all they jump to hit the beach J team his team is advancing Tom Cruz panics he tries to run in the opposite direction from the conflict but Sergeant Pharaoh says he grabs him and says private you're going the wrong way you're going to miss your moment and tosses him back in the right direction listen family we face many challenges even our nation is facing some serious challenges it isn't wrong to feel some fear because there is no courage without fear

Jesus is with us in those moments though he isn't lifted up by people who are never afraid he's lifted up by disciples who trust in him in the midst of their fear don't run away from the confrontations with the darkness but stand in the power of the gospel stand on the word of God stand in the name of Jesus trusting in him to keep you up don't retreat don't throw up your hands at the sin and darkness of our country I'm done I'm moving to Greenland don't throw your hands up you're not happy okay but where is your happiness found don't retreat trust Jesus in the midst of this cultural battle stand on the word not your feelings this moment

[44 : 44] I'm telling you is the church's moment let the kingdom of darkness do what it will the kingdom of light has already won the battle Jesus already judged the world on the cross and the devil is defeated listen saints don't give up don't get mad at what the world is doing this is Babylon Babylon don't be Babylon but you and I can have an effect you and I can be sons and daughters of light as we trust in Jesus and take our light filled lives into the culture standing on the truth standing on the gospel listen don't worry about winning debates lose the debate your make the gospel known not winning debates just make the gospel known let the Lord do the heavy lifting and bringing people to himself don't be afraid your wisdom in Christ is greater than the wisdom of the world let the kingdom of darkness do its best but don't miss your moment don't miss your moments lift him up lift him up father oh help us to lift

Jesus up may we bring our fear our insecurities even our sin all to you so that Lord you might make us strong you might cleanse us from all unrighteousness and you might equip us to withstand the attacks of the darkness Jesus the light of the world lives in us I kind of wish he had chosen better than me especially but he didn't he chose me and he chose all of my brothers and sisters we're not the high and mighty of the world most of us we're just ordinary Joes and ordinary Janes but in Jesus we know now we know in Jesus we are strong we are mighty in Jesus we're unstoppable because he's unstoppable so use us for your glory save souls deliver people from the sentence of hell set people free in this life and give them hope for the next help us to live like we know this is true help us to trust in Jesus and give ourselves Father glorify your name amen