



Jesus Christ, The Gospel to the Greeks

You must understand and interpret the Bible in the time in which it was written. To understand certain passages of Scripture that were written in the times when the Roman Empire controlled the Middle East, you have to go back and understand how they lived in the days of the Roman Empire. You have to know the Grecian influence on the Roman Empire if you want to correctly interpret Jesus Christ speaking to Greeks as in John 12. Our Lord had to communicate to them in language and analogies that they understood. The whole Palm Sunday incident was totally outside of their frame of reference!

Our Lord's Uses the Analogy of the Seed of Wheat

In John 12:23, "Jesus answered them" is the present middle indicative of ἀποκρίνομαι (apokrinomai) and means to give an answer to a question proposed, to answer, to begin to speak, but always where something has preceded. "The hour" refers to the approaching crucifixion. "Has come" is the perfect active indicative of ἔρχομαι (erchomai) and means this hour was designed in eternity past. The active voice means the hour was approaching in six days with the reality of the Cross as the way of eternal salvation.

"And Jesus answered them, saying, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.'" (John 12:23, NASB)

Remember, the Greeks did not understand the Levitical offerings, the Psalms, the basic Old Testament doctrines, the Jewish feasts, or the tabernacle. But they did understand a seed of wheat producing a wheat crop. This will be another way of describing the death of Christ. Many Greek legends were built around the death of the seed. They understood that!

In John 12:23, "for" indicates a purpose clause ἵνα (hina), "Son of Man" is a title for the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ. "To be glorified" is the aorist passive subjunctive of δοξάζω (doxazō). The aorist tense refers to the resurrection, ascension, and session. The passive voice means Christ will receive glorification by being seated at the right hand of God the Father. The subjunctive mood means He is not speaking of potential, but goes with *hina* to introduce a purpose clause. The subjunctive has other uses other than potential. It is sometimes used in the sense of an imperative or sometimes it is used with some particle or conjunction to indicate what type of a clause we have.

It is the purpose of the God-man to go to the Cross and bear the judgment of the sins of the world! This is a great passage on communicating Bible doctrine to Greeks, instead of Jews.

The Gospel Presented

In John 12:24, "Truly, truly" means truth, truth and refers to a point of doctrine about to be presented. "I say to you" is the dative of advantage. "Unless" is ἐάν (ean) and introduces a third class condition that means maybe it will, maybe it won't. This way Jesus introduced the equivalent of a parable. Any farmer knows that a seed must be alive to germinate. A dead seed put into the ground remains a dead seed.

"Grain of wheat" is κόκκος (kokkos) and refers to a planting seed. "Falls into the earth and dies" is the aorist active participle of πίπτω (piptō). Action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb. "And dies" is the aorist active subjunctive of ἀποθνήσκω (apothnēskō) and means that the grain has to be in the ground first. Jesus Christ must go to the Cross first before He can bear our sins.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if



it dies, it bears much fruit.” (John 12:24, NASB)

This was the best way to communicate the Gospel and the resurrection to the Greeks. This is a technical word for Jesus Christ bearing the spiritual death of man, bearing the imputed and inherent sins of man, as well as personal sins. What are the wages of sin? Spiritual death.

In Genesis 2:17, “for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die” means that when Adam sinned, he immediately died spiritually.

“but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” (Genesis 2:17, NASB)

In John 12:24, “it remains alone” is the present active indicative of μένω (menō) and refers to every seed planted is alone. This describes the seed after it is planted. It is solitary. It has not multiplied yet. “But if it dies” is the aorist active subjunctive (third-class condition setting up alternatives) of ἀποθνήσκω (apothnēskō). “It bears much fruit” is the present active indicative of φέρω (pherō) and refers to the harvest.

Our Lord would go to the Cross alone. He would die alone spiritually for the sins of mankind. He would be resurrected alone and be the First Fruits. He would ascend to the third heaven alone. He is unique. He was alone! This qualified Christ to be the only celebrity in the Church Age.

Our Lord Speaks of the Spiritual Life After Salvation

In John 12:25, “He who loves his life” is the present active participle of φιλέω (phileō) which is the strongest word for love, a total love of the soul. Agape is a love of mental attitude only. This is capacity for life. “He that keeps on loving his life” is ψυχή (psuchē) and refers to self-consciousness, mentality, volition, emotions and conscience.

“He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.” (John 12:25, NASB)

“He who loves his life” is an idiom of Greek culture, self-gratification, an attitude of the soul. It means to be stuck on yourself, to have a false scale of values, to live for pleasure, self-gratification. “Loses it” is the present active indicative of ἀπόλλυμι (apollumi) and is idiomatic and means to lose the purpose or function of life - why you are here. Why is our Lord giving them doctrine for living the spiritual life after salvation? Because some of the Greeks were believing while He talked. The spiritual life begins immediately after salvation! There will be no impact or purpose in life after salvation without divine truth in the soul.

“He who hates his life” is the present active participle of μισέω (miseō) and means putting the spiritual ahead of the material. It is really the attitude of the mature believer’s grace life. “Will keep” is the future active indicative of φυλάσσω (phulassō) and means to deemphasize those things that lead to self-gratification and to emphasize Bible doctrine. “To life eternal” means you take with you into eternity the Bible doctrine you have in the right lobe of your soul.

John 12:26 is referring to production of divine good in the believer’s spiritual life resulting from intake and application of *epignosis* Bible doctrine. Bible doctrine in the soul produces effective Christian service or divine good production. There is no service without the filling of the Holy Spirit and *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the soul.

“If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.” (John 12:26, NASB)