

The Hour Is Come (12:20–36)

The request of some Greeks to interview Jesus occasioned a lengthy response from Jesus regarding the road that lay before Him. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus had avoided situations that would hasten His death. But now the “hour” had come for “the Son of Man to be glorified.” Jesus’ death and subsequent resurrection is what is in mind by the term “glorified.” Jesus presented Himself as a role model for our perspective on life. Life should not be loved from a temporal perspective but hated as that which represents our sinful separation from God our Creator. This is not, as the life of Jesus demonstrated, a rabid asceticism but an attitude that puts more importance on the world to come.

Jesus understood that His death would bring life to many. Nonetheless, Jesus’ heart was “troubled,” which is all John wrote in relation to the Gethsemane passages of Jesus’ final hours recorded in the Synoptics. Jesus’ troubled heart surely came more from the idea of bearing the weight of the sin of the world as a sinless Being than the mere physical and emotional agony that awaited Him. While Jesus contemplated praying to God for deliverance from that which awaited Him, He remained on the course God had willed for His life.

Not only would Jesus’ death offer liberation to men and women from the bounds of sin, but it would bring judgment upon the world and drive the prince of the world from its midst. The cross achieved salvation for those who would believe, brought judgment upon the world for the refusal to believe, and defeated Satan’s rebellion once and for all. The lifting up of Jesus on the cross would be the beacon that would draw all persons—meaning without regard to sex, race, social status, or nationality—to Himself for deliverance from sin.

God or the World (12:37–50)

How could the Jews have witnessed so many miraculous deeds and remain in unbelief? The answer is found in prophecy. Jews both would not and could not believe. They would not believe when they should have according to what they had witnessed. They could not believe, not because they had freedom of choice removed from them, but because they had purposely rejected God and chosen evil. Thus God turned them over decisively to their choice. Those who had chosen to believe were afraid to make their decision public for fear of excommunication. Even these believers were indicted for caring more for the approval of others than for the approval of God.

What is Jesus' relation to those who reject Him? John made clear that it is not judgment (12:47). It is not that judgment for unbelief will not take place (12:48), only that the primary mission and role of Jesus was not judge but Savior (12:47b). Again, the close relationship between God and Jesus is clearly exhibited in regard to thought and deed (12:44–45, 49–50).

A word should be given regarding the difference between “last day” and “last days.” The latter refers to the current period of time, begun when Christ entered the world (Acts 2:17; Heb. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:20; Jude 18). The “last day” (singular), however, refers to the consummation of time and history when the great resurrection and judgment will occur of all persons (1 John 2:18).¹

¹ James Emery White, [“John,”](#) in *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 481–482.