

## Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) Jesus Christ was misunderstood by so many people in John 12. Mary, the crowds, the Pharisees and even His disciples did not grasp the significance of Christ's actions and words. Can you relate to this in your own life and walk with Jesus? Can you look back on a time in your life when you thought Jesus was doing one thing, and then BAM!, as it turned out, Jesus was doing something entirely different? Share with your group.
- B) The moment when Philip of Bethsaida is approached by the Greeks in John 12:20-24 seems to be the first time in the entire chapter where Jesus Christ really has something significant to say. It's as though he is 'awakened' by the news that the Greeks are wanting to speak with Him. Why do you think this moment was so significant?
- C) What special significance does the arrival of Christ's "hour" hold for us at Long Beach Alliance Church? What special significance does that band of Greeks carry for a church like our own? Why should we consider them our 'forefathers'?
- D) In the world of American business, the "corporate ladder" is climbed to achieve greater authority, greater prestige, and most of all -- greater compensation. Jesus describes what the corporate ladder looks like in the Kingdom of God in John 12:24-26. Rather than a need for 'upward mobility,' a movement toward downward mobility is desired. Rather than seeking to advance self, seeking to advance Jesus Christ is the highest calling, even at the cost of your own life. What will the reward be for all this "upside down" living? The honor of God the Father, who provides life eternal to Jesus Christ and brings fruitfulness in the place of His sacrifice on the cross. How is your "downward mobility?" In what areas do you feel convicted that you have traded "Kingdom gain" for "personal gain." Share at least one area of personal growth for which you desire prayer and accountability. Join together as a group to seek God in giving you His priorities through His Son for the sake of His Kingdom!

# The Moment Of Truth

Long Beach Alliance Church • May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**AND JESUS \*ANSWERED THEM, SAYING,  
"THE HOUR HAS COME FOR THE SON  
OF MAN TO BE GLORIFIED. "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 12:23-24 (NASB)**

### **1) The Fog Lifts As The World Responds**

- A) Mary anointed Jesus as an act of extravagant worship (John 12:3). While she simply intended to worship, Jesus redefined her anointing as part of His burial preparation (12:7).
- B) The large crowd of pilgrims which came to Jerusalem for the Passover welcomed Jesus with palm branches and "Hosanna's" (12:12-13). While they were seeking a political/military Messiah, Jesus came in peace (12:14-15), and the crowds also fulfilled prophecy (Psalm 118:26; Zechariah 9:9).
- C) Even the disciples did not understand the significance of what was going on around them (12:16). While "the world" (12:19) misunderstands Jesus and attempts to worship Him their own way, Jesus is looking for something entirely different, which is suddenly revealed (12:20).

## 2) 'The Hour' Finally Arrives!

- A) The "Greeks" come to Philip of Bethsaida seeking Jesus in Jerusalem (12:20-21). These were Greek foreigners who were attracted to the morality of Judaism, but rejected the need for circumcision\*.
  
- B) The tension of the passage suddenly intensifies (12:22). "Philip comes and tells Andrew, then they both come and tell Jesus" -- everything shifts into the present tense. For the disciples, this a whole new group seeking Jesus. After consulting with one another, they take it to the Master.
  
- C) This is the moment Christ has been seeking (12:23). The Gentiles are seeking Him, and not in Galilee, Samaria or East of the Jordan. The Greeks are seeking Jesus in Jerusalem, the heart of the Jewish world. The Pharisees, despite their misunderstanding, have prophesied correctly (12:19).
  
- D) This is the pinnacle moment for Jesus Christ. The world is finally coming to Him, He has fulfilled His Father's call on His life (John 17:4). The hour for Jesus to be "glorified" has come† (John 2:4, 4:21, 23, 5:25, 28, 7:30, 8:20, 12:23).

\* It is likely that this was a group of the "God-fearers," people who were attracted to the lofty morality and monotheism of Judaism, but who did not care to become full proselytes by circumcision (e.g. the Ethiopian eunuch, Acts 8:27). They might visit Jerusalem for the great feasts, but they could not pass beyond the 'Court of the Gentiles' when they went up to the temple (note "the dividing wall of hostility," Ephesians 2:14). These "Greeks" would not necessarily have come from Greece itself. There were many Greeks in Decapolis (region East of the Jordan River between Galilee and the Dead Sea), for example, and they could have come from such a place. At Passover, worshippers came from widely scattered places throughout the Roman Empire to join in the festivities (various sources, esp. Leon Morris, NICNT, Gospel According To John, Page 525).

† The verb "has come" is in the perfect tense. In Greek, this carries with it the meaning, "the hour has come and now stays with us into the future."

## 3) The Upside Down Priorities Of Jesus

- A) Jesus Christ describes, in emphatic terms (truly, truly -- 12:24), a series of counter-intuitive ideas which describe the example of Christ which we are to follow (12:24-26). These "reversal verses" illuminate Jesus Christ's "glory" (12:23).
  
- B) **Live, Die, Multiply.** Jesus, in almost poetic words, describes the necessity of His own death, and the surprising reversal of fruitfulness coming from death (12:24). We must die to the old life in order to experience the fruitfulness of life in Jesus Christ!
  
- C) **Love Leads To Death, Hate Leads To Life.** Jesus, in another surprising reversal, illustrates what is required of His disciples, challenging them to lose their natural "self-preservation" in order to be preserved eternally (12:25).
  
- D) **Be My Servant And God Will Honor You.** Serving Christ produces the honor of God. To serve the One is to serve the Other. "Follow Me" is the whole of Christian service, where the reward is being in the presence of Christ, the very honor of God (12:26).
  
- E) Taking this section of verses as a whole (12:24-26), we see Jesus Christ calling His followers to a realistic life of suffering, embracing the loss of this life for the sake of the Master. There is no other route in serving Jesus Christ, no other route for securing "life eternal" from God, and no other route for truly experiencing the "glory of God" (12:28).