

**JOHN 12:20-26**  
August 21 1988  
ROME GEORGIA  
**JANUARY 18, 2015**

**John 12:21** The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS.

**I. THE SINCERE SEEKERS**

**II. THE SOWN SEED**

**III. THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

This was not the first occasion when Gentiles had come to Jesus. In fact, there is a *perfect participle* that is used to indicate that they were in the "**habit of coming**".

These men, like the Ethiopian Eunuch of **Acts 8:27**, were searching for a better way.

THE GENTILE MAGI HAD COME TO SEE CHRIST and to PRAISE HIM AT HIS BIRTH, HERE, NEAR HIS DEATH, GENTILES AGAIN COME TO "SEE" CHRIST.

Charles Colson makes the statement in his book "Kingdoms in Conflict": "A BORROWED MANGER AND A BORROWED TOMB FRAMED HIS EARTHLY LIFE." P. 85.

JUST INSIDE THAT FRAMEWORK WE SEE THE GENTILES WHO CAME SEEKING AFTER CHRIST!

They sought out **Philip** – Phillip was (c. Acts 6:5), was a **Hellenistic, or Grecian Jew**. **One who had lived outside of Jerusalem**, but nevertheless followed the customs and religion of the Jews. This is no doubt why the Greeks sought out Philip. 12/08/02)

**People tend to seek out those whom they can identify with in their quest for Christ. i.e. "Cowboy Churches" – OR Christ the Only Way Mission**

The request to "see" Jesus was not a casual request to catch a glimpse at a superstar.

**SEE = *Eidon*** which is aorist form of *horad* which is "seeing with perception. a grasping of significance of that thing beheld."

THE MAGI JUST AFTER THE MANGER - AND THESE GREEKS - JUST BEFORE THE TOMB. AND JUST AS THE **MANGER WAS EMPTY** WHEN THE MAGI FOUND THE CHRIST CHILD, SO TO WAS THE **GRAVE SOON TO BE EMPTY**.

WHEN CHRIST IS INFORMED THAT THESE GENTILES DESIRE TO SEE HIM HE SAYS:

**John 12:23** And Jesus answered them, saying, THE **HOUR IS COME**, THAT THE SON OF MAN SHOULD BE **GLORIFIED**.

CF. 2:4; 7:6; 7:30; 8:20: "**HOUR HAS NOT COME**"

To Mary - 2:4 Jesus saith unto her, **Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.**

To his brothers - 7:6 Then Jesus said unto them, **My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.**

To those that wished him dead - **7:30** Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, **because his hour was not yet come.**

To anyone who tried to hurry the Plan Of God - **8:20** These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; **for his hour was not yet come.**

**BUT FROM THIS POINT ON, IN THE REST OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, THE HOUR IS COME!!!!**

**THE HOUR IS COME "IN ORDER THAT" (not "in which") THE SON OF MAN SHOULD BE GLORIFIED.**

**THE GLORIFICATION OF CHRIST CONSISTED IN HIM BEING ACKNOWLEDGED BY MEN.**

In the parallel passage of the account of His entry to the city we find: TURN HERE

**Luke 19: 40** And he answered and said unto them, **I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.** And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, **If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.**

This group of gentiles seeking for the Christ was evidence that Jesus was being acknowledged by those outside of the Jewish circle as well as those within, and therefore the hour that Christ should be glorified in - ergo recognized - **was upon them.**

This hour centered **not on his temporal earthly ministry, but on his eternal intercessory ministry** which he **initiated by his obedience to death on the cross** and it is to this death and its larger picture that he speaks in the illustration of the seed.

## **II. THE SOWN SEED**

In v. **24**, Jesus uses a grain of wheat to illustrate a point about His death.

**John 12:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.**

WHEAT IS USED IN BOTH THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS TO SYMBOLIZE MANY THINGS.

WE NEED TO KNOW A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHEAT TO APPRECIATE WHAT CHRIST IS SAYING IN THESE VERSES.

Wheat is the oldest grain crop grown all over the world. Bread is the chief by-product of wheat. (**Christ in Jn. 6. is the bread of life.**) Even though we make bread from the grain that we call wheat, **the real purpose of the kernel of wheat is to REPRODUCE.**

**IN ORDER FOR THE WHEAT TO FULFILL ITS ROLE IN GOD'S SCHEME OF THINGS, IT MUST FIRST GO THROUGH A PROCESS THAT APPEARS DESTRUCTIVE.**

**THE GRAIN MUST BE PUT IN THE GROUND! THIS IS NOT DESTRUCTIVE - IT IS NATURAL! IT IS THE ONLY WAY FOR THE GRAIN TO REACH ITS INTENDED POTENTIAL.**

**THE BRAN IS CAST OFF AND THE SEED CHANGES INTO A NEW THING. THAT IS ITS SOLE PURPOSE IN LIFE - TO REPRODUCE.**

THIS REPRODUCTION IS ONLY ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH DEATH! IT MUST DIE IN ORDER TO BRING FORTH FRUIT!

CHRIST USES THIS PICTURE TO ILLUSTRATE HIS OWN DEATH

**IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR CHRIST TO DIE IN ORDER THAT HE MAY BRING FORTH MUCH FRUIT.**

**This law of life from the agricultural world illustrates a law for all men who would serve God.**

**John 12:25** He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

TO "LOVE LIFE" = IS to "KEEP IT IN HIS OWN HAND." A life lived for self and not for others. It is a life that will never develop to the full maturity that God intended for it. Its potential for abundant, reproducing life is never reached and it withers away - just as an unplanted seed will do.

A Christian who had been raised in a log cabin was glad for the opportunity to return after a 35 year absence. As he walked across the now deserted yard a flood of memories filled his heart and mind. One memory was of a day when he had planted some walnuts along a stream that ran through his father's farm. As he approached the creek, he could see there a beautiful row of stately walnut trees. Then he recalled that he had also hidden some of the nuts in a neglected corner of the attic. When he climbed into the attic and poked around in the dark corner, he found the nuts. Dried and dust covered they were quite a contrast to the flourishing green trees that he had just visited. **db 7-31-83.**

**John 12:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Christ knew this principal of life - for He had Himself established it! He was obedient unto death one time - He did not cling to His life, He did not keep it in His Own Hand –

**Luke 23:46** And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, **FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT: AND HAVING SAID THUS, HE GAVE UP THE GHOST.**

THIS HE DID THAT WE TOO MIGHT HAVE LIFE! HE IS THE FIRST FRUITS: **I Cor. 15:20 + 23.**

**I Cor. 15:20** But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the **first-fruits** of them that slept. . . . **23** . . . But every man in his own order: Christ the **first-fruits**; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

HE WAS THE SEED THAT WAS PLANTED - WE ARE THE FRUIT OF HIS SACRIFICE.

**John 12:25** He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

**He that loveth his life**= HE THAT PREFERS HIS LIFE IN THIS WORLD LESS THAN IN THE WORLD TO COME

"**HE THAT HATETH HIS LIFE IN THIS WORLD**" =-- ONE WHO IS NOT ANXIOUS FOR THE APPROVAL OF SINFUL MEN --THIS ONE IS IN FACT GUARDING HIS LIFE UNTO ETERNAL LIFE!

THE PRINCIPAL OF THE BURIED SEED IS SIMPLE - WE MUST DIE TO SELF IN ORDER TO BRING FORTH LIFE IN OTHERS.

THIS WAS NOT A PRINCIPAL THAT CHRIST APPLIED ONLY TO HIMSELF - IT IS FOR ALL THOSE WHO NAME THE NAME OF JESUS.

Someone once asked [George Mueller](#) the secret of his marvelous fruitfulness as a Christian. He Replied:

"THERE CAME A DAY WHEN [GEORGE MUELLER DIED](#), UTTERLY DIED! NO LONGER DID HIS OWN DESIRES, PREFERENCES, AND TASTES COME FIRST, HE KNEW THAT FROM THEN ON CHRIST MUST BE ALL IN ALL." [db 7-23-73](#).

OUR SINS ARE REMOVED BY THE CLEANSING POWER OF CHRIST'S DEATH ON OUR BEHALF. WE ARE CLEANSED AND MADE ABLE TO BEAR FRUIT **THROUGH OUR DEATH TO SELF IN HIM.**

THERE IS A DISEASE THAT PLAGUES WHEAT - IT IS CALLED "**WHEAT SMUT**"

"IF WHEAT THAT HAS THIS DISEASE IS PLANTED, IT WILL YIELD MORE WHEAT WITH "**WHEAT SMUT**"

**IN THE CASE OF THOSE WHO TRUST CHRIST, WE ARE CLEANSED, OUR SINS AND THE SMUT OF THIS WORLD ARE REMOVED AND WE ARE ABLE TO YIELD GOOD FRUIT WITH OUR CLEANSED LIVES - THIS IS OUR PURPOSE.**

**WE ARE NOT PLANTED IN THE FILTH OF THIS WORLD. WE ARE NOT TO DRAW OUR STRENGTH FROM IT.**

WE ARE **PLANTED IN THE FERTILE SOIL** OF GOD'S FELLOWSHIP,

**FERTILIZED WITH PRAYER, MEDITATION, LOVE AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE.**

WE ARE **NURTURED WITH THE WATER OF GOD'S WORD** AND CULTIVATED BY HIS GENTLE CHASTENING.

CHRIST HAS ALL THIS FOR THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM TO THE POINT OF BEING WILLING TO TURN LOOSE OF THEIR OWN LIVES AND PLACE THEM IN HIS HANDS.

EVEN WHEN WE DO THIS - THERE ARE STILL OBSTACLES ALONG THE WAY. ONCE THE HEALTHY WHEAT BEGINS TO GROW, THERE ARE GRASSHOPPERS, CINCH BUGS, ARMY WORMS AND A HOST OF FLIES THAT WILL ATTACK THE GROWING WHEAT.

**JUST SO - WHEN WE DIE TO SELF - WE OUGHT NOT BE LOOKING FOR A FREE RIDE IN THIS LIFE.**

### **III. THE SUFFERING SERVANT**

**John 12:26** IF ANY MAN SERVE ME, LET HIM FOLLOW ME; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.

FOLLOW CHRIST WHERE? TO DEATH! - HOW?

**Hebrews 2:9** But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels **for the suffering of death**, crowned with glory and honor; that he **by the grace of God SHOULD TASTE DEATH FOR EVERY MAN.**

**Romans 6:4** **Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death:** that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **For if we have**

**been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:**

**Galatians 2:20** I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST: NEVERTHELESS I LIVE; YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST LIVETH IN ME: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

"IF ANY MAN SERVE ME, LET HIM FOLLOW ME." 26

**WE CAN NEVER PLEASE THE WORLD AND PLEASE CHRIST**

**Galatians 1:10** For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

**Luke 6:46** And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

**John 14:15** If ye love me, keep my commandments.

**RESULTS?** = PERSECUTION!

**John 15:20** Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

**THIS WILL IN TURN DRIVE US TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE FOR OUR LIFE. WE MUST FOLLOW CHRIST IN HIS SUFFERINGS IF WE ARE TO OBEY GOD'S WILL.**

**John 12:26** If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.

A CLOSE ATTENDING SERVANT -

OUR REWARD? THE HONOR OF GOD!!!!!!!

NOT THE PALTRY PRAISE OF MEN - BUT THE HONOR OF GOD!!! YOU???

**WE NEED TO BURY OURSELVES DEEP IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST, GERMINATE AND BRING OUT NEW LIFE - THIS WILL BRING ABOUT REVIVAL!**

**I Corinthians 15:35** But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? **36** Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: **37** And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, AND TO EVERY SEED HIS OWN BODY.

**THE BODY GOD HAS GIVEN TO CHRIST IS HIS CHURCH!**

WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST - WE ARE THAT WHICH HE DIED TO PRODUCE!

**A PROPRIETOR OF A DRY CLEANING SERVICE HUNG THIS QUAIN T SIGN WITH A DISPLAY ON WORDS IN HIS SHOP WINDOW:**

**"WE DYE TO LIVE, WE LIVE TO DYE; THE MORE WE DYE, THE MORE WE LIVE; AND THE MORE WE LIVE, THE MORE WE DYE." DB 7-23-73**

THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE CHRISTIAN - THE MORE WE DIE THE MORE WE LIVE!

THE ABUNDANT LIFE COMES THROUGH THE LIFE THAT IS BURIED WITH CHRIST!

---

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:**

**JN 12:21** - outline JOHN RITCHIE #305 from "*On Basic Bible Truths*" p. 83. (green paperback)

**"We WOULD SEE Jesus - AN EARNEST DESIRE**

**John 12:21** The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, **WE WOULD SEE JESUS.**

**We DO SEE Jesus - AN OPEN VISION**

**Hebrews 2:9** But **WE SEE JESUS**, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

**We SHALL SEE Jesus - A BRIGHT PROSPECT**

I **John 3:2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, **when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for WE SHALL SEE HIM as he is.**