

Sent: Wednesday, April 08, 2015 9:52 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study

Men--Last nite we talked about Jesus' "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem, as recorded in John 12:12-50. This is one of the few incidents in Jesus' life included in all four gospels! But, as Kostenberger notes, unlike the synoptic writers, who accentuate more keenly "the shame endured and the pain suffered by Jesus as our sinless substitute on the cross," John presents the cross "unequivocally as the place of Jesus' glorification!"

In accordance with God's perfect timing--at the precise time "foreordained from eternity"--when the Passover lambs would be sacrificed--Jesus presented Himself to die! He put it this way: "The hour had come for the Son of Man to be glorified!" And, as we learned in John 10, "no one would take away His life from Him, but He would lay it down on His own initiative!" This is what He was sent by His Father to accomplish! He wasn't a "victim!"

What a great text we had for this study! Filled with great theological concepts! And yet some very difficult words as well, from Jesus Himself!

Among other things, Jesus says, in verse 25, that "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal." What could He possibly mean? In a similar "difficult" passage, in Luke 14:26, He says that "if anyone comes to Him and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple! He's obviously speaking in relative terms and about a "lesser," and much greater, love! It's essentially the same idea as "denying ourselves and taking up our cross and following Jesus!"--as recorded in Matthew 16:24-27 and Luke 9:23-25--and it has to do with "repudiating" a self-centered life and "living for God's glory!" Seeking to love God and others by saying "no" to selfishness and pride! I was reminded of the words of Jim Elliot who, along with four other pioneering missionaries, were martyred in trying to reach the Auca Indians in the jungles of Ecuador, back in January 1956. I remember very distinctly the "sad" and shocking news over Christian radio of this happening when I was 16 years old! And I particularly remember how challenged I was by the words quoted from Jim Elliot's diary where he wrote: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose!" And the later book by his wife, "Through Gates of Splendor!" This is the kind of love and commitment, I believe, that Jesus was speaking of in our text!

Another verse from our text that confuses many people is verse 32 where Jesus said: "And I, if I be am lifted up...will draw all men to Me." This verse is often used to suggest "universal salvation"--but not just for "men," of course! We know that interpreting it this way would be clearly inconsistent with the rest of Scripture, including such verses as John 1:12, John 3:3 and 3:16, among many others! Kostenberger seems right in suggesting that it probably refers, in context, to "all kinds of people"--and particularly in referring to non-Jews to whom the Gospel would be revealed!

And in another seeming inconsistent statement, Jesus said, in verse 47, that He "did not come to judge the world but to save the world"--and yet He said, in verse 31, that "now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out"--speaking of Satan, who

was soundly defeated and judged, although not yet "sentenced" when Jesus died on the cross! And Jesus also speaks of a judgment that will take place at the "last day" (vs. 48). And it's in this context that Jesus calls on people to "believe in the Light...(now!) while you have the Light," again suggesting that it won't always be there to receive!

Well, quite a passage of Scripture! And so, with completion of chapter 12, again quoting Kostenberger, the "curtain closes in the Johannine drama..." John has completed his presentation of Jesus as the "sign-working, God-sent Messiah," with a "final messianic portrait." Beginning with chapter 13, we will see Jesus moving away from His public ministry and devoting Himself solely to preparing His disciples for what's to come. We'll see His parting instructions to His followers, which are just as applicable for us today! Can hardly wait! Hope you are challenged and motivated too to get into these studies!

Have a great week, men!

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