



March 20, 2016 | John 12:20-43
Palm Sunday: The Rest of the Story

Read John 12:20-43.

For the context of today's Scripture focus, scan John 12:9-19 and summarize what happens immediately preceding today's passage. What happens immediately afterwards in John 13?

The Seed and the Life in John 12:24-26

This picture of a grain of wheat illustrates that fruitfulness and God's glory can be revealed even in death.

[Q] How does Jesus' death illustrate this?

[Q] How might surrendering your life illustrate this concept? In John 15, Jesus says He is the True Vine. How does remaining in Jesus as your True Vine connect to this idea of a seed dying and multiplying?

From the *The ESV Study Bible* on John 12:25:

"Jesus speaks in absolute terms to emphasize a point: **loves his life** means "delights in his life in this world more than in God," and **hates his life in this world** means, by contrast, "thinks so little of his life, and so much of God, that he is willing to sacrifice it all for God." Following Christ entails self-sacrifice, shown supremely at the cross."

[Q] How do we "love" our lives? Make a list of specific ways we "love" our lives more than we love God:

[Q] In John 14:6 Jesus says He *is* the Life. How is Jesus *your* Life? Look at the list you made in the previous question and substitute "Jesus is my ____." (For example if you listed that we love our possessions, then substitute "Jesus is my treasure", etc...) Ask God for help in turning over these areas.

“If we are looking for comfortable lives, then we will protect our plans and desires, save our lives, and never be planted. But if we yield our lives and let God plant us, we will never be alone but will have the joy of being fruitful to the glory of God.”

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*

The Voice in John 12:28-30

John 12:28 is one of three instances in Jesus’ earthly ministry where a heavenly voice affirms Him. Read Matthew 3:17 and 17:5 for the other two times.

[Q] What is the significance of these three instances? In other words, why at these three occasions does a heavenly voice validate Jesus’ identity and mission? How does John 12:30 add to the discussion?

The Light and the Dark in John 12:31-43

[Q] We have seen the phrase *lifted up* before, in John 3:14-15 and 8:28. What does Jesus mean when He talks about being *lifted up*? How might this phrase imply more than one level of meaning? (See Isaiah 52:13.)

[Q] What is the crowd looking for in a Messiah (John 12:34)? How does Jesus reply to the crowd’s questions (35-36)? What is Jesus saying here? Jesus has used similar phrasing in John 8:12, 9:4, and 11:9–10. How do these passages add color to what Jesus is saying in this passage?

[Q] From John 12:37-43, in what way does declaring truth to resistant people harden them further? How can a person see a miracle and become even more determined to resist Jesus? Do you know anyone like this? How does our passage this week help you to know how to pray for them?

Pray for hearts to soften and eyes to open.

Take it Further: John 12:31 is an important verse. The prince of this world is Satan, and Jesus states that his death on the cross will result in defeat for Satan. Read Hebrews 2:14–15 and Colossians 2:13–15. How do these two passages shed light on what Jesus says here in John?

Next week is Easter and John 20. valleycommunity.cc/easter