

JESUS' CALL TO CHRISTIAN LIVING IN THE CENTER OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

Bob Reid, Scholar-in-Residence, UPPC 4/9/00

John 12:20-36

{20} Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip,
{21} who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."
{22} Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

{23} A Jesus answered them, "**The hour has come** for the Son of Man to be **glorified**."
HOUR HAS COME
TO BE GLORIFIED

FIRST FOLLOWING SAYING

{24} I Very truly, I tell you,
unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth
and dies,
2 it remains just a single grain;
I' but if it dies,
2' it bears much fruit.
UNLESS GRAIN DIES
IT REMAINS ALONE
IF GRAIN DIES
IT BEARS MUCH FRUIT

SECOND FOLLOWING SAYING

{25} I Those who love their life
2 lose it,
I' and those who hate their life in this world
2' will keep it for eternal life.
LOVE LIFE
LOSE LIFE
HATE LIFE
KEEP LIFE

THIRD FOLLOWING SAYING

{26} A I Whoever serves me
2 must follow me,
B and where I am,
B' there will my servant be also.
A' I' Whoever serves me,
2' the Father will honor."
SERVES ME
FOLLOWS ME
MASTER
SERVANT
SERVES ME
HONORABLE
NOW
THIS HOUR

{27} A' "**Now** my soul is troubled. And what should I say—
'Father, save me **from this hour**'?
No, it is for this reason
that I have **come to this hour**."
THIS HOUR
GLORIFY

{28} Father, **glorify** your name."

A Then a **voice** came from heaven, "I have **glorified** it,
and I will **glorify** it again."
VOICE
GLORIFY AGAIN

{29} B The crowd standing there heard it
and said that it was thunder.
THUNDER?

B' Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."
ANGEL

{30} A' a Jesus answered, "This **voice** has come for your sake,
not for mine.
VOICE
YOUR SAKE

{31} b **Now** is the judgment of this world;
NOW/THIS HOUR

b' **now** the ruler of this world will be driven out.
NOW/THIS HOUR

{32} a' And I, when I am lifted up from the earth,
will draw all people to myself."
GLORIFY GOD
YOUR SAKE

KATACRISIS

{33} (He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.)

{34} The crowd answered him,
"We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever.
How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up?
Who is this Son of Man?"

{35} A Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer.
Walk **while you have the light**,
B so that the **darkness** may not overtake you.
B' If you walk in the **darkness**,
you do not know where you are going.
WHILE LIGHT IS
DARKNESS
DARKNESS

{36} A' **While you have the light**, believe in the light,
so that you may become children of light."
WHILE LIGHT IS

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

I QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION: TO WHOM OR TO WHAT HAVE YOU DIED?

At the core of the Gospel is a demand that followers must be people who choose to die to all the old societal expectations and familial commitments. To some, that may sound like the demand of a cult. But the choice to follow Jesus is not about mind control or manipulative techniques to separate followers from family. That's not a choice to die to the old life. Without the choice, the real daily unmanipulated choice, a person is not a follower of Jesus. Our text unfolds this fact.

II THE HOUR COMES IN JOHN'S GOSPEL (Vss. 20-23)

- A. At various points in John's Gospel, Jesus states that his time, or "his hour" had yet to come: 2:4, 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20.
- B. In Mark, Luke and Matthew, the "hour" appears to be a reference to the time of prayer (literal hour) prior to Jesus' arrest as he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (cf. Mark 14:35-36). In these portrayals of the scene, Jesus is depicted as agonizing between his own conflicting desires (*thelema*) concerning that which is about to come (including his death) vs. his commitment to remain steadfast to what he believes to be the desire (*thelema*) of God (see Luke 22:42).
- C. But in John's Gospel, it is from this story forward (cf. 13:1, 17:1 etc.) that Jesus declares his hour has come? Here, "hour" becomes all of that which occurs during passion week. Multiple choice question: What happened to change events? Was it:
1. because of the raising of Lazarus (11:38-43)?
 2. because of the plot to kill Jesus (and Lazarus) is set into action (11:44-53; 12:10-11)?
 3. because "The whole world has gone after him" in the Triumphal entry (12:12-19)?
 4. because some unnamed Greeks sought out a disciple with a Greek name to find out if they could follow Jesus (12:20-22)?
 5. All of the above?
- d. However, where the synoptic Gospels represent a common tradition of Jesus being "troubled" during his hour, John portrays Jesus as having viewed his hour as a time when he will be "glorified"

II THE HOUR OF GLORIFICATION (Vss. 27-30)

- A. In John's Gospel the "hour" is about glorifying God's name (cf. "hallowed be your name")
1. Unlike the synoptic Gospels, the struggle is not that of a human agony forced to grapple with simultaneously envisioning a daunting and grisly death and that of fulfilling a divine purpose.

