

The Drawing of Men

John 12:32-33

“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.”
33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.”

Jesus Christ was the kind of man who could go for forty days without food or water. He could pray over a two-piece fish dinner, multiply it and feed between five and twenty thousand people. He could calm the sea with a word and walk on top of the water. **He could lay His hands on the blind and they could see.** Deaf ears opened, the lame walked and the dead came alive at the word of Jesus. And yet, for all **His amazing miracles** and for all of **His revolutionary teaching**, He could **not grab** and **keep the attention of the world** based on His **miracles** and **teaching ministry** alone.

Jesus knew this and that is why He made the statement found in our text, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me.” **The cross was God’s plan.** It was a **horrible spectacle; an open show of what had to be done in order to eradicate the sin of mankind.** It was **the suffering that Jesus agreed to endure for you and me.** **Not only did the cross get the attention of those who saw Jesus’ hands and feet nailed to the wood that day; but it has continued to draw the attention of millions across the world for over two thousand years.** **Therefore, I want to call your attention to the drawing of men.**

It is a biblical fact that Jesus was born to die. He was **innocent** from His **birth** to His **death.** He led a **sinless, blameless** and **faith-filled** life. **He was pure and holy, and His efforts in ministry were only to help people, to teach them truth and to heal and set them free.** Yet, **the people turned on Him** and **demanding He be put to the worst kind of death.**

You see, today the cross is a reminder of the great sacrifice Jesus made for mankind. But during the days of Jesus, **the cross was**

not an icon to be revered. It was a symbol of shame. It was the final destination of society's worst offenders. Not only would the local authorities nail a criminal's hands and feet to the cross, but they would also take the suffering a step further by standing the cross up in a public place or on a well-traveled road. This public display humiliated the criminal and his family, and was a way for the government to deter crime.

The cross should not have been the final destination of God's Son, a sinless and innocent Man. Yet, in John 18:37 when Jesus was being questioned by Pilate before going to the cross He said, "Too this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." In other words, "This is why I was born, so that I would go this cross! This is the destiny I was born to fulfill."

That is why Jesus did not retaliate and demand He be set free when the authorities captured Him and put Him in prison. He did not plead His case and scream about His innocence when He was brought before the judge. 1 Peter 1:20 reminds us, "He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you." Jesus knew His destiny.

Did Jesus want to suffer? No! Jesus was a man and knew the pain and humiliation that He was about to experience. When He was in the Garden of Gethsemene praying and thinking about what lie ahead, Jesus said in Matthew 26:42, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." In other words Jesus prayed, "Father, if it can be done any other way, please do not let me die on the cross. But whatever Your will is, Father, that is what I will do."

Jesus did not want to suffer, but He knew the Word of God, and He knew that Leviticus 17:11 had said that life is in the blood and without the shedding of blood, there could be no atonement for sin. Ladies and gentlemen, there was no other way! The Cross was the place, and Jesus was the only person to make it happen!

I received Jesus Christ as my personal Savior when I was just a nine-year-old boy, but I never really understood the magnitude of the cross until I was an adult. It was only after years of living in *sin* and *rebellion* did I witness the salvation of my wife, and through that experience I began to understand that nobody cared enough to die for me and to show that kind of love except Jesus. Nobody cared enough to be beaten because of me, to be tortured and humiliated for me. Nobody ever died for me.

Jesus went to that cross so that I would not have to pay for my own sin. When I realized that it blew my mind. That is grace that I did not deserve and mercy that I had to have. But He did it all for *me* - and He did it all for *you*.

I realize now that the Cross was drawing me from the time that I was that nine-year-old boy. But I was running from it because I was looking at the religious world and seeing the Cross as just an icon of the church. But it is not. But when I finally got a glimpse of God's call on my life and said, "yes," I have not looked back since, and I have not let the joy of my salvation wane. It is just as fresh for me today as it was the day the redeeming blood of Jesus washed away my sin with just a simple prayer. And the longer I serve Him the more I realize that it was never God's plan for any of us to pay our own way. It has always been His plan for a lost and dying world to accept His Son. Ladies and gentlemen, the world needs the work of the Cross!

Jesus made me clean. He can do the same thing for anybody who will stop and take a good look at the Cross. It is not a religious experience; it is the amazing grace of Holy God drawing us to Himself. It is where you look at the purity of God and recognize the impurity of sin in your own life. Why are we drawn to Jesus Christ? The answer is found in 1 Timothy 2:4, "God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

We were created to know God and to fellowship with Him. Without Him, we are *lost* and *confused*. With Him we have the Mind

of Christ, we have the Word of God, we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, we have His power, His guidance, His protection, His joy, and His sovereign Seal. We do not have to make up some plan to save ourselves. God has already done that through the finished work of Jesus Christ. We just have to accept that plan as truth and say, "God, I realize I need Your plan."

What I am talking to you about today is not religion; I am talking about putting your faith in the finished of Jesus! What matters in your life is if you know Jesus or not.

I am convinced that when you come face to face with the reality of what Jesus did on the cross, it will change your unbelief into faith. It will change your indifference to devotion. It will change your hatred into love. Why? Because that is what Jesus does – He changes you on the inside and that change starts a snowball effect that shows up on the outside, and new life begins to manifest itself in your everyday living!

Once you come face-to-face with the cross, you will be charged with the knowledge of what Jesus did for you. When you realize Jesus' sacrifice washed away all your sin – past, present, and sin you haven't even done yet – you will be so thankful for God's goodness that it will illuminate your mind, your will, and your emotions. You cannot stay depressed and angry when you think about what Jesus did for you on the Cross. When you think about how He forgave you, it is a whole lot easier to forgive others! His love is deposited in your heart and you cannot keep it from overflowing on to the people around you. They will see your peace, they will see a change in your attitude, and they will see the light of His glory in your eyes.

When you have Jesus as your Savior you have a different look at life! John 10:10 reminds us He came that we "might have life, and ... have it more abundantly." Therefore, no matter what problems arise, you "are more than conquerors through (Christ) who loves us." You can speak His Word in faith and see the results, as seen in Mark 11:24,

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”

Child of God, you need to speak your faith, as seen in 2 Corinthians 4:13, “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.” **Listen, I don’t spend my time doubting God, or His plan, or what He has told me He is going to do in His Word. *Doubt may come into my mind*, but I make sure that *faith comes out of my mouth* to cancel out that doubt!** Child of God, find the promises in the Bible that apply to your need and believe it and confess it as done for the glory of God!

Jesus made this statement in John 10:9-10, “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” **The motive and ministry of Jesus was to heal people - not make them sick.** His motive and ministry was to prosper people - not to make them poor. His motive and ministry was to reveal the very nature of God, as seen in Colossians 2:9-10, “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” Jesus made this bold statement in Matthew 11:27, “All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”

The Cross made a spectacle out of society's worst offenders. Jesus was society's greatest gift and yet, He chose to bear the sins of the world and become a spectacle of shame. He did it for you and He did it for me. **He took our place and paid the price so that we would not have to pay for our sin.** I believe that the Cross gave us a true idea of what length God would go to in order to make a way for us to become righteous.

God's heart was to reach everyone - common people and royalty alike. Jesus *revealed that*, as *He loved us*. *He revealed that as He suffered for us on the cross.*

Today, Jesus is no longer hanging on that cross. He *died* and *rose from the dead*. Now, He is seated at the right hand of God in Heaven *where He makes prayerful intercession for you and me*. *He has done the work; He has taken all the sin, guilt and shame that belonged to each of us.*

If you do not know Jesus as Lord today, I would like to introduce you to Him. All you have to do is accept His sacrifice. *All you have to do is reach out to Him.* Believe in your heart and say with your mouth that He is Lord.

Everyone please stand for prayer.

Father,

Thank You for Your great love that sent Your Son Jesus Christ to pay the price for my sin. Thank You for Your goodness and mercy that follows me all the days of my life. Help me to live my life in such a way that others might be drawn to see the life-changing power of the cross. In Jesus' name. Amen.