

Men's Sunday Night Live
Lesson 12 - John 12:1-50
Finding Identity and Purpose
The Hour Comes

While the Jewish leaders were plotting to slay Jesus, His friends were honoring Him at a feast in Bethany. Mark 14:3 indicates it was in the home of Simon, apparently a leper whom Jesus had healed. Martha served the meal. She had learned the secret of letting Him control her life. The ointment Mary used would cost a year's wages for a common laborer. She had saved it to anoint Jesus and show her love and devotion as one that would follow Him.

At Jesus' birth, Gentiles came from the east; now at His death, they returned. Why does John mention them at this point? Because the King has now been rejected by Israel. The Jews had said, "We want to see a sign," but the Gentiles said, "We want to see Jesus." Philip had a Greek name, so the visitors wanting to see Jesus came to him; and he took the matter to Andrew, who also had a Greek name. Jesus had taught His disciples to avoid the Gentiles; but now He says that the Gentiles also will be saved through the cross.

The last words of Jesus' public ministry were a terrible warning against letting the opportunity for salvation pass by. In the verses that follow, the Apostle John explains why He hid Himself and why the Jews were condemned. John presents the conflict between light and darkness. Light symbolizes salvation, holiness, life. Darkness stands for condemnation, sin, death.

In vs. 42–50, John quotes Jesus and shows why many people reject the light. Some reject Him because of the fear of man. In vs. 48, Jesus states that rejecting the Word of God leads to condemnation. Salvation comes through the Word, and the very Bible that men reject today will be part of the evidence against them at the judgment.

This chapter closes John's record of Jesus public ministry. It reminds us again that we dare not neglect spiritual opportunities. The light will not always be shining. One day Jesus will hide Himself from those who have no concern for His salvation or His Word.

Read John 12:1-50 and answer the following questions

1. How do you explain Mary's feelings and actions for what she does in 12:3?
2. What do you think John wants us to learn from the scene in 12:1-8? What point does this scene make about Jesus and how people respond to Him?
3. How did the Jewish leaders react to the reception the crowds gave Jesus?
(See 12:9-11, 19)
4. When the Galileans tried to proclaim Jesus King, He refused. But at this Passover, He chose to ride into Jerusalem on a young donkey. Why do you think He accepted the opportunity now?
5. John never does tell us whether the Greeks got to see Jesus. He only records Jesus' response. What did the coming of the Gentiles prompt Jesus to talk about?
(See 12:20-26).
6. Jesus in verse 24 says, "*Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it produces much grain.*" What kind of dying do you personally need to go through in order to bear much fruit? (See 12:24)

7. Verse 25 says: “*He who love his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.*” What does it mean to love or hate our lives in this world and how is it related to eternal life?

8. According to verse 26, where is Jesus? Where do we need to be in order to be where He is?

9. Why did almost none of the Jewish leaders believe in Jesus, despite His signs that pointed to His identity and purpose? (See 12:37-41).

10. Many of the rulers privately believed that Jesus was the Christ. What kept them from confessing their faith publicly? (See 12:42-43).

11. What were the benefits of believing in Jesus and the consequences of not believing in him as seen in verses 35-50?

12. Note one truth from this chapter that you would like to apply to your own life this week?

Under Authority

John 12:49

Jesus faithfully represented His Father to the world. As believers we are to live under Christ's authority and therefore we are responsible for faithfully representing Christ in our places of work. To do so we must be intimately familiar with Jesus. What He said, what His commands are, and what His purposes might be. That means a serious commitment and continuous study of the Scriptures.

As employees under human authorities, we are responsible for faithfully representing our organizations in general and our superiors in particular to other people. To do so we must be familiar with the values, goals, policies, and procedures of our employers. Neither of these tasks is an easy assignment. It's easy to misrepresent the statements of our Lord or our superiors in fulfilling our own purposes. To hear only what we want to hear.

Are there any checks and balances to guard against this type of temptation? Jesus modeled two for us. First, He asked the question and listened to the answers. For example, with Nicodemus and the women at the well. He was clear about His mission and secure in His position. As a result, He never felt compelled to prove or promote Himself. In this, He differed from many of the leaders of His day who *"Loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."* (John 12:43)