

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CROSS FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

Afternoon Message Three

Multiplication of Life through Christ's Death and Resurrection for the Glorification of the Father

Scripture Reading: John 12:12-33; Luke 12:49-50

I. The multiplication of life through Christ's death and resurrection:

- A. John 12:12-33 shows the golden time for Jesus to be welcomed and honored:
 - 1. Lazarus was just raised from the dead, and a large number of Jews believed—vv. 1, 11.
 - 2. The Pharisees conceded that the world had gone after the Lord—v. 19.
 - 3. Even the Greeks came to seek Him—vv. 20-21.
- B. The Lord was not excited by the crowd, but spoke instead about a grain of wheat falling into the ground to die—v. 24:
 - 1. The life that was in the Lord as the grain of wheat had to be released and imparted into man—1:4; 3:16.
 - 2. The Lord came that we may have life; to do that He had to go through death—10:10-11.
 - 3. Instead of dying, everyone today wants to receive glory—12:43; 1 Thes. 2:6.
 - 4. What is needed today is not excitement or a welcome or a following—Matt. 14:22-23; 2 Cor. 2:12-13.
 - 5. Before there can be a harvest, many grains need to fall into the earth to die—2 Cor. 4:12.
- C. Only life lasts—John 4:14; 1 Cor. 3:6, 9, 14-15; Rev. 22:1-2:
 - 1. We may be able to stir up people or excite them, but time will tell how much life we have imparted into them—1 Thes. 2:7.
 - 2. Life is enduring. Anything that does not last is not life—1 Cor. 13:8.
 - 3. Today's Christianity has little power because there is little life—John 5:5, 24-25.
 - 4. The only way for us not to repeat the history of Christianity is to die—Heb. 13:13.
 - 5. The overcomers are those who stand in the place of death that others may receive life—Josh. 3:17.
- D. The Lord's death not only releases the divine life, but also multiplies it—John 12:24; Matt. 14:19-20:
 - 1. The divine life is within us, but how much this life is multiplied depends upon how much death we undergo—2 Cor. 4:10.
 - 2. The only way to bring the church into being and to increase it in life is by dying; this is absolutely contrary to the human concept—John 3:30.
 - 3. The church increases not as the result of a golden opportunity, but of persecution and death:
 - a. The persecution under the Roman Empire did not frustrate the growth of the church, but when the persecution turned into a welcome, the church life was ruined.

- b. M. E. Barber sowed herself as a seed in China, not caring for the crowd.
 - c. Watchman Nee's ministry was not a ministry of outward activity, but of the outflow of the inner life.
- 4. We must care for how much life the new ones receive through our impartation, for how much life is infused into others through us; this infusion depends on our being conformed to the death of Christ—Col. 1:24; Gal. 4:19.
- 5. We like to be uplifted; but if we are uplifted, there will be no multiplication—Luke 22:24; John 13:14.
- E. The Lord was pressed to be baptized with a baptism—Luke 12:50:
 - 1. The word “pressed” means compressed.
 - 2. While the Lord Jesus was in His humanity, the divine life in Him was compressed, straitened, constrained, confined, and limited.
 - 3. This limitation could be removed only by the baptism of dying on the cross.
 - 4. When the shell of Christ's humanity was broken through His crucifixion, all the elements of His divinity were released.
 - 5. This release of the glory of Christ's divinity was the casting of fire on the earth—Luke 12:49.

II. Through Christ's death and resurrection, the Father was being glorified through Christ's glorification—John 12:23, 28; 13:31-32; 17:1, 5:

- A. Glory is God released and expressed.
- B. Christ's death glorified the Father because it released the divine life.
- C. Whenever the divine life within us is released, God is glorified:
 - 1. The unique way to glorify God is to die.
 - 2. By dying, the divine life within us is released, and God the Father, the source of this life, is glorified.

III. The death of Christ accomplishes the saving of our soul:

- A. “He who hates his soul-life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life”—John 12:25.
- B. The only way to save our soul is to die.
- C. The more we die with Christ, the more we save our soul.

IV. Through the death of Christ, people are drawn to Christ:

- A. “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself”—John 12:32.
- B. The real attraction is in the dying:
 - 1. When we die the death of Christ, we shall be a magnet drawing people to Christ.
 - 2. Such an attracting, the proper attraction, is not a matter of stirring up people emotionally.
 - 3. Every crucified person is a magnet.

V. Through the death of Christ, the world is judged and the ruler of this world is cast out—John 12:31.

VI. If we want the church in our locality to multiply, and if we want to glorify God and to deal with Satan and his world, we have to die.