

2019 Global Ministries Conference
Leading the Nations to Jesus
“Sir, We Wish to See Jesus”
John 12:21
Pastor Bryan Wintersteen
March 3, 2019 • Evening Sermon

Our hearts are encouraged to hear that missionaries we support as a church in China dealing with persecution are asking for boldness to stay the course and to stay fixed on Christ. That is our theme for our missions conference this year which is taken from John 12:21. John 12:21 says [21] *So these (the Greeks) came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”* That is what is going to sustain our brothers and sisters in China who are under such heavy persecution. They need an image of Christ that is biblical, clear, purposeful and focused so that they would see Jesus.

In John 12 we get images of Christ from a variety of perspectives. Jesus had a ministry to the lost and it was right before He was about to enter Jerusalem where the people were going to lay down palm branches so that Jesus could cross over them as He was on the donkey. As He did this the people would be shouting ‘Hosanna in the highest!’ That was one version from the crowd as they would see Jesus as Hosanna.

There were others in John 12 like Mary who shatters the extravagant perfume over the feet of Jesus to wash His feet. How did she see Jesus? Clearly she saw Him as worthy of extravagant sacrificial love. Martha is also there and she saw Jesus as someone to be served and worthy of her service. Another one there was Lazarus who was raised from the dead just a few chapters earlier and he sees Jesus as his healer. Lazarus sees Jesus as someone to be worshiped who has the power over life and death.

Judas Iscariot is also in John 12. How does he see Jesus? He sees Jesus as someone to steal from as he was entrusted with the money bags. The large crowd was there and gathered as a source of curiosity. How did they see Jesus? They saw Him as someone they were curious about as they wanted to know what was happening there. The Pharisees who were there saw Jesus as a threat to their existence, as a rival, very similar to what we hear about how the Chinese government looks at the church there in China. The chief priests saw Jesus as a blasphemer, one who was worthy of death.

The Greeks in John 12:21 were asking a powerful question – “Sir, we wish to Jesus.” I want to recommend a book to you by a similar title, We Would See Jesus, by Roy Hession. It is a powerful read but a short read and it gives you a biblical picture of Jesus. That’s what we need. I would ask you the question, how do you see Jesus? Everything in your life revolves around how you would answer that question.

We have heard recently a testimony of a missionary pastor in China who is facing severe opposition because of how he sees Jesus. Persecution has a way of shaking out the true believers from those of us who are the ‘hanger-ons.’ It has a way of wrestling our soul about what is really important to us. I pray your answer to that question be one that exalts and honors Christ. How do you see Jesus?

Shortly, we will have the opportunity to celebrate the Lord’s sacrificial gift to us where He laid down His life in order that sinners would be set free from all of their sins, that He might appease the wrath of God and grant His righteousness to us who are desperate because we are

sinner's dead in our transgressions and sins. We will celebrate this by coming to the Lord's Table together.

Further in John 12 Jesus responds to the crowd hearing the Father's voice from heaven and tells them what He is going to do for them. John 12:30–32 says [30] *Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. [31] Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. [32] And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."*

We shouldn't be surprised that He would say this because He said it earlier in John 3 when He was talking with Nicodemus. In John 3:13–15 Jesus says [13] *No one has ascended into heaven except He who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. [14] And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, [15] that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.*

Do you see Jesus high and lifted up? Do you see yourself as a sinner desperately needing the grace, mercy and love of Christ? His body was given for you and His blood was poured out for you as He died on that cross for you. Thanks be to God for He is our Savior! Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for Jesus whose death and resurrection is how we have right standing before you. Thank You for our brothers and sisters in China who are praying for boldness and courage, would You grant it in full measure to them? Help them to see Jesus. Help us to see Jesus. I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.