AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
BIBLE STUDY – WEDNESDAY June 24th, 2026

Study Series: That You Might Believe, A Journey through the Gospel of John
Part 21: The Hour Has Come: The cross, Fruitfulness, Final Appeal to Believe

Text: John 12: 20-50

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Introduction: When the Hour Comes
John 12:20–50 brings us to a solemn turning point in John's Gospel. For much of His ministry, Jesus said His hour had not yet come; now the hour has arrived. It is the hour of the cross—where shame becomes glory, loss becomes victory, and death becomes the doorway to life. This passage shows that the cross is not a tragic interruption, but the very purpose for which Jesus came. The question is not only what Jesus did, but how we will respond to the light He has given.

The Hour Comes When the Nations Seek Jesus (vv. 20–22)
The Greeks' request, "**Sir, we want to see Jesus**," signals that Jesus' mission is opening beyond Israel to the nations. Their coming points to the wider harvest that will follow His death. Yet Jesus will be fully revealed not merely by being seen physically, but through the cross. To truly see Jesus is to see Him through His surrender, suffering, and saving purpose. Why does this request signal that Jesus' "hour" has come? How do people today seek Jesus without embracing the cross?

The Cross Teaches That Death Produces Fruit (vv. 23–26)
Jesus explains His hour with the picture of a grain of wheat: if it remains alone, it produces nothing; but if it falls into the ground and dies, it bears much fruit. This is the mystery of the cross—life through death, multiplication through surrender, and glory through sacrifice. The grain does not lose its purpose by being buried; it fulfills its purpose by yielding itself. **Following Jesus means sharing in His pattern of surrender, obedience, and life through death.** Spiritual fruitfulness is impossible without sacrifice. As 1 John 2:6 reminds us, whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk as Jesus walked.
What does "dying to self" practically look like in your context? Where might God be calling you to surrender in order to bear fruit?

The Troubled Soul and Resolute Obedience (vv. 27–30)
Jesus acknowledges the anguish before Him, revealing the real cost of obedience. His troubled soul shows that faithfulness is not the absence of struggle but surrender in the midst of it. Yet He does not ask to be spared from the Father's purpose; He prays, "Father, glorify Your name." The voice from heaven confirms that God's glory is revealed through Jesus' obedience. Hebrews 5:8 reminds us that, though He was a Son, He learned obedience through suffering. What does this teach about facing difficult obedience? How can we choose God's will when it is costly?

The Cross as Judgment, Victory, and Attraction (vv. 31–33)
Jesus presents the cross as a redemptive turning point. Through His death, the world is judged, the ruler of this world is cast out, and all people are drawn to Him. To be "lifted up" points both to crucifixion and exaltation: judgment on sin, victory over evil, and invitation to salvation. What looks like defeat becomes the place where Christ triumphs. Philp 2: 8-11 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. 9 Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names..

1. Judgment of the world: the cross exposes human rebellion.
2. Defeat of the ruler of this world: Satan's authority is broken.
3. Drawing all people: salvation is opened universally through Christ.

Urgency of Response: Walk in the Light (vv. 34–36)
The crowd struggles to reconcile Jesus' words with their expectation of a permanent, triumphant Messiah. They expected glory without suffering, but Jesus reveals that His glory comes through the cross. He responds with urgency: walk in the light while it is still present. Light represents divine truth, revelation, and the opportunity to believe.
What does it mean practically to "walk in the light"? What are the dangers of delaying spiritual decisions?

The Reality and Causes of Unbelief (vv. 37–43)
Despite the signs Jesus performed, many still refused to believe. John interprets this through Isaiah, showing that hardened hearts and spiritual blindness can persist even in the presence of clear evidence. Miracles may reveal truth, but they do not force surrender as we saw with Israel on the wilderness journey; the heart must respond in faith.
A deeper issue emerges: some "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Some believed privately but feared public identification with Jesus. Unbelief may be rooted in fear, pride, or the desire for human approval.

What are modern forms of "loving the praise of men"? Why is fear of people such a strong barrier to faith? Can private belief without public commitment be sustained?

Final Appeal: Believe in the Light (vv. 44–50)
Jesus' final public proclamation gathers the central claims of His ministry: to believe in Him is to believe in the Father; He has come as light into the world; His words bring life and will also stand as the standard of judgment. The same word that offers salvation will expose rejection if it is ignored.
What does it mean to truly believe in Jesus beyond intellectual agreement? What personal response does this passage demand from us today?

Conclusion:

- The cross is God's appointed hour of glory; surrender is the pathway to fruitfulness.
- Spiritual fruit requires death to self, obedience, sacrifice, and trust.
- Unbelief often grows from fear, pride, or desire for human approval.
- Light requires urgent response; we must walk in the truth we have received.

Reflections:

- Where is God calling me to deeper surrender?; Am I resisting obedience because of fear, comfort, or approval?
- Am I walking fully in the light I have received?; What specific step of obedience should I take after this study?

Jesus' final public appeal leaves no neutral ground: to receive His word is to walk in light and life; to reject it is to remain in darkness and face judgment by the very word He has spoken.