

GOSPEL OF JOHN 12 C (12:20-31)

20And there were certain Greeks (non-Jews, lived as Gentiles in the world of Greek civilization) from among those going up that they might do reverence at the feast. **21**Then these came to Philip (a disciple who was a Jew with a Greek name), who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” **22** Philip came and told Andrew, and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. **23** But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

Bp. Gerasimos: “Here the Greeks are the forerunners of the church of the Gentiles (all people outside of the covenant of Israel)... With the seeking of the Greeks, it became clear that Christ was the Savior of the whole world (4:42) . and not only Israel (Matt 15:24-26). This was a sign that the hour had come for the glory through the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ... now the Greeks have also come as representatives of the nations.”

Saint Chrysostom: “Being now near to become converts, they were at the feast. Philip gives place to Andrew. But he does not at once act with authority, for he heard, ‘Do not begin to go into *the* way of the nations [Mt. 10:5]’; thus cutting away all excuse of ignorance from the Jews.... Then what is, ‘The hour hath come’ (ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα)? ‘Now it is time for Me to go to My Passion, since all things are fulfilled. If we were to continue waiting for the disobedient and not admit these who even desire to come, this would be unworthy of care and solicitude.’” [Hom. 66, *P.G.* 59:396, 397 (col. 367).]

“Be exalted O Lord above the heavens and let your Glory be over all the earth (Psalm 57:5).”

24“Verily, verily, I say to you, unless the grain of the wheat that falls into the earth should die, it abides alone; but if it should die, it bears much fruit.

Saint Chrysostom: “He here speaks of the Cross, for that they might not be clamorous at seeing, that just when Greeks also came to Him, then He was slain. He says to them, ‘This very thing much rather causes them to come forward, and shall increase the preaching of Me.’”

St Irenaeus: “A cutting from the vine planted in the ground bears fruit in its season, or a kernel of wheat falling onto the earth and becoming decomposed rises and is multiplied by the Spirit of God, who contains all things. And then, through the wisdom of God, it serves for our use when, after receiving the Word of God, it becomes the Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ. In the same way our bodies, being nourished by it, and deposited in the earth and suffering decomposition there, shall arise at the appointed time. The Word of God grants them resurrection to the glory of God, even the Father who freely gives to this mortal immortality, and to this corruptible incorruption. This is so because the strength of God is made perfect in weakness in order that we may never become puffed up, as if we had life from ourselves, or become exalted against God with ungrateful minds.”

25“The one who loves his life shall lose it; and the one who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.

Chrysostom: “The present life is sweet and full of much pleasure – not for everyone although it is for those riveted to it. The moment anyone looks to heaven, however, and sees the beauty that is there, he will soon despise this life as if it counted for nothing. The beauty of an object is admired, in other words, as long as there is nothing more beautiful to be seen. But when something better comes along, the earlier object loses its luster...The one who loves his life in the world loses it by indulging its inordinate desires...The one who hates it resists them. . . when the soul invites us to things contrary to God, we should turn it away from them with all our might.”

Bp. Gerasimos: “You lose life when in the temporal world, you hold on to it tightly only for yourself, and you gain life as you give it out of love to others...The way of love is the law of the new life. The way to true life is the way of love unto death for the sake of others...This is the way followed by Christ. Everyone who wants to be a servant of Christ must follow the same way.”

26“If anyone serve Me, let him keep on following Me; and where I am, there My servant shall be also. And if anyone serve Me, the Father shall honor him.

Saint Chrysostom: “He is speaking concerning death, and requiring the following which is by works. For it is needful that the one who serves always follows the one who is served....‘If anyone is willing to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and keep on following Me [Mt. 16:24]’; that is, ‘Be ever,’ He says, ‘prepared for perils, for death, for your departure from this place.’ Then after He told of what was burdensome, He puts forth the prize: And of what kind was this? The following of Him and being where He is, showing that the resurrection shall succeed death.”

Augustine: “But you yourself should also serve Christ in your own way by good lives, by giving to the poor, by preaching His name and doctrine as best as you can too.”

Bp. Gerasimos: “He who wants to serve Christ and His church must follow Christ, must do what Christ does, and that is to offer Himself self-sacrificially into the service of the Gospel and the Church for the salvation of the world and the glory of God.”

Where is Christ found on earth?

Saint Chrysostom: “But where is Christ? In the heavens. Let us, therefore, even before the resurrection, transport soul and mind there. Why does He say the Father shall honor him that serves Christ, and not ‘I shall honor him’? Since they as yet did not hold correct thinking befitting Him, but held a greater opinion of the Father.” [Ib.]

27“Now My soul has been troubled; and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’; but on this account I came to this hour.

Bp. Gerasimos: “The moment is indeed horrifying from a human standpoint, even for Jesus. The drive for life is powerful, and no one wants to die, unless there is need for sacrifice for the sake of the world...the hour has come *to complete the work of the Father.*”

Fr. Behr: “It is this exalted vision of Christ that John depicts for his readers...in a manner indeed very different than the other Gospels...the one who is not put to death but rather lays down his life, of his own accord (Jn 10:15-18), at the right time (Jn 2:4); the one who does pray that the cup should pass yet reconciles himself to His Father’s will (Matt 26:39; Mk 14:36; Lk 22:42), but instead asserts: ‘What shall I say? Father save me from this hour?’ No, for this purpose I have come to this hour (Jn 12:27)...IN all this, John presents Jesus not as being put to death, but rather, as the Good Shepherd, laying down His life of His own accord for His sheep so that they might be one flock (Jn. 10:14-16).”

28“Father, glorify Thy name.” Then a voice came out of the heaven: “I both glorified it and will glorify it again.” 29The crowd then that stood by and heard it was saying that thunder had occurred; others were saying, “An angel hath spoken to Him.” 30Jesus answered and said, “This voice hath not occurred for My sake, but for your sakes. 31“Now is a judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out.

Saint Chrysostom: “What is ‘a judgment of this world’? It is as though He said, ‘There shall be a tribunal and avengement.’ How and in what manner? ‘Satan slew the first man, having found him guilty of sin, but in Me this he found not. Why then did he hand Me over to death? Why did he put in the soul of Judas to destroy Me?...How then is the world judged in Me?’ It shall be said, as if a court of justice were sitting, to Satan, ‘Well, thou hast slain all men, because thou didst find them under liability for sin. But why didst thou slay Christ? Is it not clear that thou didst it wrongfully?’ Therefore in Him the whole world shall be avenged.” [Hom. 67, *P.G.* 59:403 (col. 372); cf. Bl. Theophylact, *P.G.* 124:678A (col. 132).]