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September memory verse Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)

¹⁰⁵ Your word *is* a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

Commentary on John Chapter 12, by Chuck Smith 9.9.2020

Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he had raised from the dead. They made him a supper; and Martha served [typical of Martha]: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very expensive, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the aroma of the ointment ([Jhn 12:1-3](#)).

Typical of Mary, worshipping; Martha, working...it takes all types. God has built into our characters these very qualities. Martha, busy serving; Mary, busy worshipping.

Then said one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray him, Why didn't they sell this perfume for three hundred pence, and given the money to the poor? ([Jhn 12:4-5](#))

Actually, it was very expensive. A pence was a day's wage for a laboring man. So you've got almost a year's wages involved here that this perfume could have been sold for.

This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and he held the purse, and he was stealing out of the money in the purse ([Jhn 12:6](#)).

Judas didn't really care for the poor, as he would be made out that marvelous man with social concern. He was a thief. He was holding the purse and had been stealing the money out of the purse. That's the only reason he wanted the perfume sold and the money put in the purse.

Then said Jesus, Get off her case: against the day of my burying has she kept this. For the poor always you will have with you; but you will not always have me ([Jhn 12:7-8](#)).

So He made Judas leave her alone.

Many of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not only for Jesus' sake, but they wanted to see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests ([Jhn 12:9-10](#))

And notice how evil men they are.

they consulted how that they might put Lazarus to death also; because by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus ([Jhn 12:10-11](#)).

So they're going to try and destroy the evidence by killing Lazarus.

The next day many people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches off the palm trees, and they went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord ([Jhn 12:12-13](#)).

And so, knowing that Jesus was going to be coming from Bethany, having to come down from the Mount of Olives, they went over to the path that comes from Bethany, down the Mount of Olives, into the Kidron valley to Jerusalem. And as Jesus was coming, they greeted Him, waving the palm branches. And so, we have Palm Sunday, the Sunday before the crucifixion. And they were crying the 118th Psalm, "Hosanna!" "Save now" is what the word means in Hebrew. "Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord!"

Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it was written, Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him ([Jhn 12:14-16](#)).

Now, John is very honest and very frank here. He said, "You know, we didn't think about it until after He was glorified, and then we thought, 'Oh, wow, remember how we waved the palm branches and He was riding on a donkey? Isn't that what Zachariah said? "Rejoice greatly, O daughters of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee, but he is lowly, he is sitting on a donkey, the foal of an ass." Wow!"

In other words, he is saying, "We weren't trying to deliberately set the stage. We didn't say, 'Now what does the Bible say is supposed to happen next? Let's work it out this way.'" It wasn't a deliberate conspiracy to set the stage. It was something they just did, and afterwards they realized, "Wow! We were fulfilling prophecy." And the realization came, but not until after Jesus was glorified. So it wasn't a deliberately staged event as far as the disciples were concerned.

And the people therefore that were with him when he called Lazarus out of the grave, and raised him from the dead, they bare record ([Jhn 12:17](#)).

They were telling everybody about it.

For this cause the people also met him, for that they had heard that he had done a great miracle ([Jhn 12:18](#)).

I mean, it had really been buzzed, this miracle of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. And so everybody was excited.

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Hey, do you realize how we're not prevailing? the whole world is going after him. There were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast ([Jhn 12:19-20](#)):

They could worship from the court of the Gentiles; they could not come in.

And the same came therefore to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and they desired of him, saying, Sir, we would like to see Jesus. And Philip came and told Andrew: and Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit ([Jhn 12:21-24](#)).

What a beautiful picture! You have a little grain of wheat. You set that little grain of wheat here on the pulpit, and you can come back a year from now, and it's still one little grain of wheat sitting there on the pulpit. Come back ten years from now, still one little grain of wheat sitting there on the pulpit. But if you put that little grain of wheat into the ground, it dies. But out of the death comes a new form, a new body, comes the stalk, comes the new kernel or corn of wheat, they call it. And many wheat seeds. And the potential of one wheat seed is tremendous. I read somewhere that if you would take a kernel of corn and plant it, and then take from that one kernel of corn all of the seeds that came off the kernels that grew from the one, plant them. I think it is in ten years that you would have enough corn seed to plant every acre of ground on the face of the earth with corn. Just each year planting everything that came from the one. You see, when God created the plants and all, He said, "Be fruitful, multiply. Fill the earth." And surely, the potential is there. And so, Jesus is using a neat little illustration here, referring to His death. "Look, unless it dies, it stays by itself. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit." Talking of His death. Through His death, He was going to bring forth much fruit. You included, tonight. Part of the fruit.

And he that loves his life shall lose it; but he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal ([Jhn 12:25](#)).

He had said earlier, "He who seeks to save his life will lose it; he who will lose his life for My sake, the same will find it or save it." Much the same, loving life. You're going to lose it anyhow. But if you are looking forward to that new life, life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor. Now is my soul troubled; what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour ([Jhn 12:26-27](#)).

You remember He kept saying, "My hour is not yet come, My hour is not yet come"? Now He's approaching the hour. And as He's approaching the hour, He's beginning to go through this inner turmoil. "My soul is troubled; what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'?" He's already beginning to enter into some of the agony of the garden. These are the last days; He knows it. In the garden He prayed, "Father, if it's possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Thy will be done." Now, even before then, He's going through that turmoil. "Father, save Me from this hour. Yet, it's for this hour that I came into the world. For this cause, that's why I'm here."

Father, glorify thy name ([Jhn 12:28](#)).

Oh, this is just as powerful as the prayer in the garden when He said, "If it is possible, let this cup...nevertheless, not My will, Thy will be done." How glorious it is when we submit our ways to God. "God, save Me from this hour; but yet, not so, Lord, You just glorify Your name."

There came a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. And the people therefore that were standing around, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, No, an angel spoke to him. And Jesus said, This voice did not come for my sake, but for your sake ([Jhn 12:28-30](#)).

I don't need this kind of a spectacular demonstration to make Me believe. It wasn't for My sake that this voice came, it was for your sakes.

But now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of the world be cast out ([Jhn 12:31](#)).

You see, they'd just been saying, "Save now," and He says, "No, it's the judgment of the world; for the prince of the world himself is going to be cast out. He is to be despised and rejected of men."

And I, if I be lifted up ([Jhn 12:32](#))

The corn of wheat died, it will bring forth much fruit. If I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

This he said, signifying what death he should die ([Jhn 12:33](#)).

When He said, "If I be lifted up" He was talking about, "I'm going to be lifted up on a cross. I'm going to die on the cross." And the lifting up was only signifying death on a cross. Unfortunately, many ministers and Christians take this term, "If I be lifted up" as meaning exalting Jesus. "If we just hold Jesus up before people, if we just exalt Jesus, if we just lift Him up before people, He's going to draw everyone unto Him. So, what we must be doing is exalting Jesus before the people and lifting up Jesus before the people, so that all the people will be drawn to Him." That's not what Jesus is saying! And there's even some chorus that is almost blasphemous if you think of it. And it's, "Let's lift Him higher, let's lift Him higher, that all the world might see." You know, He's only talking about death on the cross. The corn of wheat falling into the ground, that it might bring forth much fruit. And not exalting Jesus or lifting Him up before the world. Not referring to that at all, and that's an unfortunate understanding many people have taken, because they didn't read the next verse. They just take this statement of Jesus, "If I be lifted up, I'll draw all men unto Me." "Oh, well then, let's lift Jesus up." No, He's talking about the cross. If I say, "Well, let's lift Jesus up," I'm saying, "Well, let's put Jesus on the cross." So,

This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, Now we've heard out of the law that the Messiah abides forever: how come you are saying that you've got to be crucified? who, then, is the Son of man? ([Jhn 12:33-34](#))

You say, "I'm going to be crucified." Wait a minute! The scriptures say that the Messiah is going to abide forever. "For unto us a child is given, unto us a Son is born, the government shall be upon His shoulders. And the name shall be called 'Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;' and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, the Messiah abides forever." Upon the throne of David to order it and establish it in righteousness and judgment, from henceforth, even forever. For the zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this. How come you say you're going to be crucified if the Messiah abides forever?

And Jesus said unto them, For a little while the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walks in darkness does not know where he's going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. And these things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them ([Jhn 12:35-36](#)).

Now the Pharisees are out to get Him for sure. But yet, He is in control of the events. The crucifixion must take place on Passover in order that He might fulfill in His sacrifice all of the symbolisms of the Passover; the blood of the lamb slain in Egypt on the doorpost, bringing life for those condemned to die. So, it was necessary that the crucifixion take place on Passover, and thus, He hid Himself.

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they did not believe on him ([Jhn 12:37](#)):

Now, there is a common misconception that if a person could just see a miracle, surely they would believe. Not so; they saw many miracles and they did not believe. In fact, it was a little worse than that. We are told in verse 38 they could not believe.

That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? ([Jhn 12:38](#))

Then there in thirty-nine,

Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spoke of him ([Jhn 12:39-41](#)).

So, Isaiah prophesied that he would be despised and rejected. "A man of sorrows, acquainted with grief." "Therefore they could not believe." Why could they not believe? That's an interesting statement: "Therefore they could not believe." Even though they saw the miracles, they could not believe.

Jesus warned in the other gospels concerning the unpardonable sin, that of the continual rejection of the Holy Spirit's conviction upon your heart. A person can reject Christ so many times that believing becomes an impossibility. There is a certain law of metaphysics. Our brains are an interesting instrument, and we can create brain patterns, so that a repeated action can create such a pattern in our brain that it's difficult and, at times, impossible to change the pattern that you've established there.

You watch a woman learn to knit and the needles just seem to go everywhere and it's slow, it's tedious. But as she continues to persist, you find that what's happening is you're patterning the brain, you're establishing grooves up here. Until finally, if you've worked with the needles long enough, you see the needles just flying. And she can be talking, watching television or something, and the needles will just be flying. Because the grooves have so planted in the brain that she doesn't really have to think about it. She can just turn on the mode up there..."knit one pearl, two"...and it just goes, and the pattern is set. And so with many things that a repeated action creates the pattern in the brain, and it becomes a very simple thing.

Now, that's why some of you old people have such a problem with Pac Man. You know, you're just too old to get any new grooves going. But you take this little kids--my little grandson, man is he a whiz at Pac Man! You know, he just sits there and he can... and I won't even put a quarter in the thing for myself, I give him the quarter and watch him do it. But I'm lousy at that game. But his, I mean, is just automatic response, that little guy's come down and the little Pac Man is going and he can just turn that little guy around and in, and his reflexes are just tremendous. The brain has been patterned so well for that stuff. You watch these kids, and it becomes an automatic kind of a response that they have. I mean, they just get into the machine, almost, into the whole thing. And you can pattern your brain so that it gets established in a set.

Now, unfortunately, a person can do that in regards to believing in Jesus Christ. You see, the first time you were faced with the claims of Jesus Christ, and you thought, "I wonder, could this be true? Could He really be the Son of God? Can I really have eternal life by believing? Well, I don't know." And it was a tough decision. I mean, it wasn't easy to say "no" to Jesus. It was a very hard decision for you to make. But ultimately, you said, "Well, no, I don't think so, not tonight anyhow."

Now, the next time you were faced with it, you see, by your saying "no" you started a groove. You planted that in your brain and it becomes a permanent part. So the next time you were faced, it was a little easier to say, "Well, I don't think so, not tonight." The groove got a little deeper. And every time you said "no," the groove became deeper and deeper and deeper, until you can be faced now with indisputable evidence, but you can't overcome that brain groove.

This is the condition the Pharisees were in. Here's a man raised from the dead. Evidence they can't deny. They might try to get rid of it by killing him, but they can't deny it. But yet, they could not believe; they had gone too far. They couldn't reverse it at this point.

It is extremely significant that nine-tenths of the decisions that are made for Jesus Christ are made when a person is a teenager. You see, before you get that groove set too deep. Nine-tenths of the decisions are made during the teen ages. As you get older, that old brain groove gets deeper and deeper until, actually, salvation, statistically, becomes an impossibility. But God is a God of grace, and so, we see many times these eighty or ninety-year-old people coming to Jesus. That's a miracle! Statistically, it's impossible, but God isn't bound by statistics. Mathematically, you can show the impossibility of a seventy-year-old person accepting Jesus Christ. But that happens, what can you say? God is a God of miracles. Salvation is a miracle. "But they could not believe."

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess, lest they should have been put out of the synagogue ([Jhn 12:42](#)):

And here is a tragic verse of scripture, For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God ([Jhn 12:43](#)).

That has been the nemesis of many a person. What a tragedy when it is said of a person, "Well, he loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." You know, "They might not understand me at the club if I spoke out for Jesus Christ." And they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. What a sad, sad commentary on many people's lives. "I'm more concerned with what people will think of me than I am what God will think of me. I'm more interested in man patting me on the back than I am God patting me on the back. I'm more interested that men should praise me than that God should praise me." They love the praise of men more than the praise of God. That is a very sad case to be in.

And Jesus cried and said, He that believes on me, believes not on me, but upon him who sent me. And he that sees me sees him that sent me ([Jhn 12:44-45](#)).

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness ([Jhn 12:46](#)).

Now, Paul the apostle said, "You are not the children of darkness that the day of the Lord should take you as a thief by surprise, but you're children of the light, therefore walk as children of the light" ([I Thessalonians 5:4-5](#)) making reference to the statement of Jesus here in John, chapter 12.

If any man hear my words, and believe not, I do not judge him: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world ([Jhn 12:47](#)).

How many times has He said this? "He that believeth not is condemned already. I didn't come to condemn the world, but that the world through Me might be saved." Now, He's referring again. That was at the beginning of His ministry, to Nicodemus in John, the third chapter. "God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And he that believeth is not condemned." ([John 3:16-18](#)). "I didn't come to judge the world. If a person doesn't believe in Me, I don't judge him. I didn't come to judge, I came to save." Oh, His glorious mission. Not to bring condemnation, not to bring judgment, but to bring salvation to men.

Now, He is coming again, and when He comes again, it will be to judge. But His first coming, the mission was salvation.

He that rejects me, and receives not my words, has one who judges him: and it is the word which I have spoken, the same will judge him in the last day ([Jhn 12:48](#)).

When you are judged, you will be judged by the Word of God. Your not believing it, that's what is going to judge you. God has given the witness; you didn't believe it, so the Word of God will judge you. Jesus said, "I'm not going to judge you, the Word that I have spoken, that's what is going to judge you."

For I have not spoken of my own; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak ([Jhn 12:49-50](#)).

So, "My words that I have spoken, they have come from God, they are going to be the things that judge you. I know that they're true; I know that God has given to me life everlasting." And that's what is going to judge you; you'll be judged by God's Word.