

"A GOD-GIVEN OPPORTUNITY" JOHN 12:27-50

Today, I want to speak to you on this subject—
"A God-Given Opportunity." Webster defines
opportunity like this:

- **It is a favorable juncture of circumstances.**
- **It is a good chance for advancement or progress.**

The Greek language defined opportunity in terms of time. The two Greek words for time are *chronos* (the passing of time) and *kairos* (an opportune moment for decision or action).

In our text, Jesus is speaking to the Jewish public for the last time. From this juncture of John's gospel forward, the Lord focuses on developing His disciples by transforming them from a physical—*face to face*—relationship to a

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spiritual relationship. For those who were listening to Jesus that day it was truly an opportune moment for decision and action.

John 12:27–28... "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Jesus had just announced that His hour had come and that meant that He would die.

My soul is troubled—Jesus knew the agonies of that awaited Him would involve mockery, abuse, scourging, a crown of thorns, a cross, bearing our sins, being separated from the Father, and the bitter taste of death.

And what shall I say? "Father, save Me from this hour?" The "hour" that He had referred to over and over again had finally come. The cross, which had cast a shadow over the entire life and ministry of Jesus, would now become a reality.

Father, glorify Your name: As Jesus thought of the cross just a few days away, His main concern was to glorify God the Father.

John 12:28–30... "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." 29 So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.

Then a voice came out of heaven: This was the third time that God the Father spoke audibly from His heavenly throne...

- **The baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:17)**
- **The transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:5)**
- **This agonizing moment (John 12:28)**

The great concern of Jesus was to glorify the Father, and He was assured by His Father that He already had and would continue to do so.

The Lord Jesus Christ was glorified when He died on the cross, when He was resurrected from the dead, when He ascended to His heavenly throne, when He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers on the day of Pentecost, when He unleashed the power of the gospel to redeem lost sinners, and He will be glorified in the ultimate sense when He comes again and establishes His eternal kingdom.

John 12:31–32... “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.”

The world that opposed God the Father, the flesh that opposed God the Holy Spirit, and the devil that opposed God the Son were judged and defeated when the Lord Jesus was glorified by dying on the cross and by being resurrected from the dead. Paul vividly described this victory that occurred at the cross...

Colossians 2:13–15... When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

And I, if I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to Myself: The verb used for *lifted* has means both *elevation* and *exaltation*. Jesus promised that when He was elevated and exalted on the cross He would draw all men to Himself.

John 12:33... But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.

Jesus not only knew that He would die, but He also knew how He would die!

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John 12:34... The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

The crowd who had enthusiastically greeted Him as a political King and conqueror, couldn't fathom the idea that their Messiah would suffer and die. They did not understand that *Jesus would come twice*. Once as the *suffering servant* and later as the *King of kings* and *Lord of lords*.

John 12:35-36... So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. 36 "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.

I wish I could help you understand the urgency of this moment. By God's sovereign grace, the Light of the world was shining. Jesus said...

John 8:12... "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

There was still a chance for these people to walk in the Light, even to become children of Light. But the Light would soon be withdrawn. Then, they would walk in spiritual darkness.

John 12:37... But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

What a sad commentary this is. Jesus had...

- Turned water into wine
- Healed the royal official's little boy
- Healed the lame man (38 years)
- Fed 5000 men from 5 barley loaves/2 fish
- Walked on water
- Given sight to the man born blind
- Raised Lazarus from the dead

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They should have fallen at His feet and worshiped Him, but they dug their heels in and refused to believe in Him!

John 12:38... *This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"*

In quoting from Isaiah 53:1 John emphasized that if someone believes, it is because God has revealed the truth about Jesus to them.

John 12:39–40... *For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM."*

In quoting from Isaiah 6:9-10, John emphasized that unbelief was because God judged those who refused to see the truth about Jesus and to turn to Him in repentance and faith. In light of this principle, *they could not believe*.

There's a warning here for those of us who refuse to believe in Jesus after repeated exposure to the gospel along with repeated promptings by the Holy Spirit.

A time will come in the lives of those who will not repent and believe in Jesus when at last they cannot repent and believe in Jesus!

John 12:41... These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

This prophecy is recorded in Isaiah 6. John properly understood that Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus 700 years before His incarnation.

John 12:42–43... Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

At this point in Jesus' ministry there were many who believed on Him secretly. They saw the signs and heard His teaching, yet because they

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were afraid of what others would think and the cost they would have to pay, they would not openly declare their allegiance to Jesus.

"Secret discipleship is a contradiction in terms for, 'either the secrecy kills the discipleship, or the discipleship kills the secrecy.'" (Barclay)

Jesus had already explained that if anyone served Him, they would receive *honor* from God the Father (John 12:26). Yet there were many who loved the honor that comes from other men more than the honor that comes from God.

Does this describe you? Would you rather please people or would you rather please God?

John 12:44-45... And Jesus cried out (imperfect tense emphasizes persistence) and said, "He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. 45 "He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me."

These are the last words in John's gospel from Jesus to the public. He boldly declared His deity

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and His oneness with the Father one final time.

To believe in Jesus was to put faith in the Father who sent Jesus.

**If you don't have Jesus as your Savior,
you can't have God as your Father!**

John 12:46... "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."

At the end of your life, you will either be welcomed into the Light of the Savior's glory and experience increasing dimensions of His love, His grace, His wisdom, His joy, and His pleasures! Or you will be cast into outer darkness and eternal doom and separation from God and all that's good. Hear the Lord's warning one more time...

John 12:47-50... "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. 49 "For I did not speak on My own

initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to what to say and what to speak*. 50 "I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

The word "rejects" literally means to *count as nothing*. It is a foolish thing to ignore the Word of God, the truth of the gospel, and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. In essence you are saying to your Creator, your only Savior, and your ultimate Judge—"***I am not interested in what you have to say!***"

God's judgment is not released upon you immediately when you reject His Word and His gospel. In His grace and mercy, He may give you many more opportunities to believe in Jesus. However, you need to be aware of this truth that one man stated so eloquently...

**There is a line by us unseen, that
crosses every path, The hidden
boundary between God's patience
and his wrath.**

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There's a truth that dominates this text...

**SEIZE YOUR GOD-GIVEN
OPPORTUNITY WHILE YOU CAN**

- **To be saved**
- **To be revived**
- **To serve the Lord**
- **To disciple your kids**