

Four Benefits of Christ's Humble Submission to the Father

The day is Monday, March 28, A.D. 33 or Nisan 11 in the Hebrew year of 3793. The events described in this study probably occurred late in the morning; however, we cannot be confident. We saw in the last study that some Gentiles had already asked to speak with Jesus, and He replied with a summary of the gospel. He explained why He must die, and that the evidence of saving faith is a humble spirit before our God. A message that some believers do not understand is that humility accompanies salvation at the moment of saving faith. Those who are saved will admit that God is infinitely holy and they are incurably evil and desperately sick (Jeremiah 17:9). God describes our sins as a filthy, bloody menstrual rag (Isaiah 64:6). We are not good people and our hearts are unloving. The first two verses in the beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-4) describe the underlying response of a humble heart at the moment of salvation. Matthew 5:3 teaches us that those who are saved respond to God like a street beggar. Matthew 5:4 says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." They are beggars because they mourn their wickedness. Saving faith causes them to seek Jesus Christ as their Savior. Saving faith produces a humble person who will sacrifice their very lives for God. Their humility before God is the essential evidence of saving faith and of true salvation. Without humility, there is no repentance over sin before a holy God. There is no pleading for forgiveness. There is no motivation to come to Christ. It is the product of saving faith. That brings us to our study in John 12:27-36. Jesus now gives us an example of a humble spirit that submits.

Christ Did Not Want to Die (v 27a). The first verse of our study is a surprise to us because we are told that Jesus asked to be saved from this hour. He was referring to being crucified on the cross.

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour?'" John 12:27a (NASB)

We wonder why He felt this way. Did not Jesus come for the purpose of dying for our sins? We discovered in past studies that the phrase

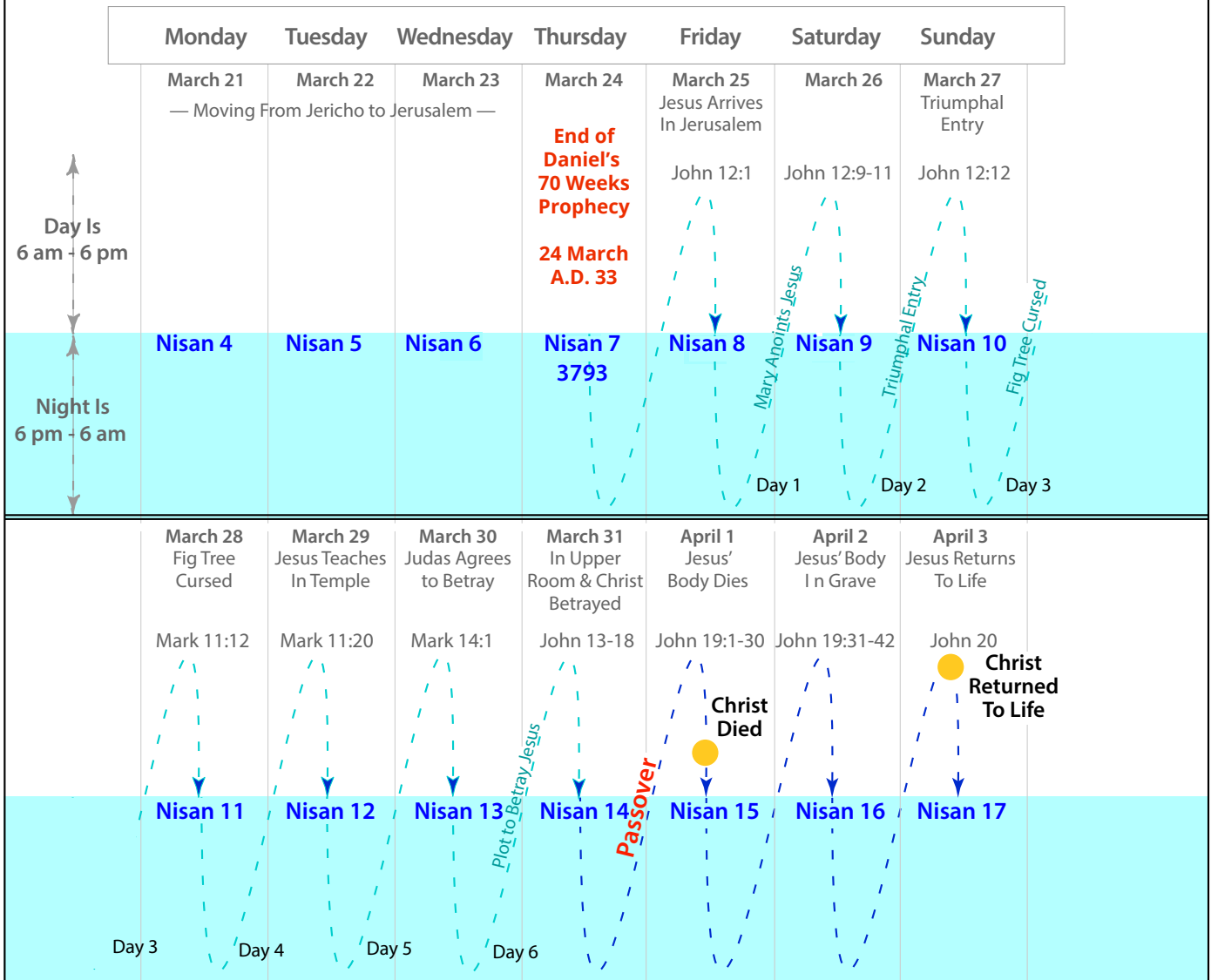
"this hour" refers to the events that would begin to occur on Thursday. He would be betrayed, ridiculed, and beaten.



He would be tried and found guilty of death because He claimed to be the Son of God. A crowd would select Him rather than a criminal to be crucified. He would die on a cross. Some soldiers would mock Him. The religious leaders would declare He was not their king. He would endure internal and external pain until He died.

He, our God, took on human flesh in order to die for our sins (Hebrews

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2:14). As a result, He felt the whips strike His back, the thorns on His head, the spear piercing His side, and the nails puncture His feet and hands. The anguish of crucifixion was well-known in ancient times. Crucifixion was the Romans' primary means of capital punishment. But worse yet, Galatians 3:13 adds that anyone who hangs on a tree is cursed. Jesus knew the truth of that statement too! Hanging on the cross was a curse!

IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE".
Galatians 3:13 (NASB)

So, we can understand that as God, living in human flesh, He would dread the events He called "this hour." Since He was God in human flesh, He would experience what every human would feel if they were in His place. Therefore, Hebrews 5:7 tells us,

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "CURSED

... He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him

from death, and He was heard because of His piety.
Hebrews 5:7 (NASB)

The hour He was anticipating would be horrible.

But there would be more to His suffering that we must not miss. For 1 Peter 2:24 says,

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. 1 Peter 2:24 (NASB)

It is not possible for us to understand the anguish He experienced when our sins were placed in His bloody, beaten body. For God the Father placed our sins in His body. I suspect that is what Jesus really did not want to experience more than the physical pain. For when the sins of the world were borne in His body, He became sin. That is what 2 Corinthians 5:21 states,

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

Imagine our holy God experiencing the wickedness of all mankind for the first time. No wonder He wanted to be saved from “this hour.” We can only imagine the horror He felt. He must have thought about and relived the anticipation of “this hour” many times. Now His “hour” will begin in just three days!

Christ Humbly Submitted (v 27b, 29-30).

The last part of verse 27 gives us comfort. For we are told,

But for this purpose I came to this hour. John 12:27b (NASB)

With that statement Jesus revealed His heart. As the God-man, He planned to humbly submit to the Father’s plan for our salvation. The Trinity had planned “this hour” in eternity past (Ephesians 1:3-6), and the Son of God had volunteered to be our sacrifice according to Hebrew 10:8-9.

After saying above, “SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them” (which are offered according to the Law), then He said, “BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. Hebrews 10:8-9 (NASB)

So, the plan was in place. The Son of God had volunteered to be “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” He said, “But for this purpose I came to this hour.” The Holy Spirit would help Him sacrifice Himself (Hebrews 9:14) and together the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit would cause Him to be resurrected (Acts 2:24; John 10:17-18; 1 Peter 3:18).

Humility is not required to be saved. For Ephesians 2:8-9 saves we are saved by faith. It is the product of faith at the moment of saving faith. Humility is a characteristic that will grow in a true believer. It is a characteristic that makes believers willing to die for Christ. It is the characteristic of Jesus Christ who died for us. For Philippians 2:8 says,

Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Philippians 2:8 (NASB)

The ultimate test that you, as a Christian, are humble is that you will sacrifice yourself for Christ. The test of biblical humility is that a person submits to Christ at the moment of salvation (Luke 18:13-14). It is produced by the Holy Spirit. We must remember the biblical principle,

Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. Matthew 23:12 (NASB)

How to Glorify the Father (v 28-30). Now let’s discover four benefits that resulted from Christ’s humility. The first one is found in verse 28 when Jesus said,

“Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” John 12:28 (NASB)

What is the first benefit of Christ’s submission to the point of death on the cross? The Father would be glorified. He wanted the Father to be glorified. The Greek word for “glory” is *doxazo* which means exalt, to praise, to acclaim, or to glorify. Jesus wanted the Father to be exalted and praised.

Then the Father replied that He had already glorified His name, and would do it again. You might ask when was the Father already glorified? First, the Father was glorified at Jesus’s incarnation when the prophecies that He gave to the prophets of a coming Messiah-King were fulfilled. The Father was glorified when the angels sang praises to Him to the shepherds.

The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them. Luke 2:20 (NASB)

Later, the Father was glorified when Jesus healed person after person (Matthew 9:8; 15:31), and raised the dead (Luke 7:14-16; John 11:40-44). The Father was glorified throughout the entire ministry of Jesus (John 17:4).

When the Father said that He would glorify His name again, He was referring to the fulfillment of every prophecy that would be fulfilled in the coming days, including Christ’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. He was also referring to Christ’s victory over sin, death, and Satan.

It is important for us to remember that our behavior and spiritual growth should glorify the Father. For Jesus said in John 15:8 that the Father is glorified when we bear much fruit. That implies our lack of spiritual growth does not bring Him glory. 1 Peter 2:12 teaches us that when unbelievers slander us as evil doers because of our good deeds, that brings glory to the Father. The negative reactions of our evil world toward believers brings glory to the Father because they reveal the Father’s children are not like Satan’s children (1 John 3:10). 1 Peter 4:11-16 is another important

passage for Christians. We should want to be holy in our behavior, thoughts, attitudes and to grow spiritually so that the Father is glorified. We should long for Him to be made holy. As a result, we should study the Bible, confess our sins, and walk in the Spirit. These help us grow spiritually. As we grow, we reveal how much we love the Father.

So, how did the people respond to the voice from heaven? Verses 29-30 says some people thought it had thundered; but others believed an angel had spoken.

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.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.” John 12:29-30 (NASB)

Jesus told them, “No!” While it is true that God has used thunder as an act of judgment (1 Samuel 7:10; 2 Samuel 22:14-16; Job 37:1-5; Psalms 18:6-15), and angels have spoken to people (Genesis 19:1-22; Daniel 4:13-17; 10:4-20; Zechariah 1:9, 14; Luke 1:11-20, 26-38; 2:8-14), Jesus told His disciples neither one occurred this time. He said the voice was not for His benefit, but for their benefit. This is a very comforting event because it illustrates the truth that God the Father cares for us. He wants us to be free from concern and worry.

Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7 (NASB)

God the Father was concerned about the disciples. The sound they heard indicated that He had answered the prayer of Jesus. It should have proved that Jesus had an unusual relationship with the Father.

So, the first benefit of Christ’s submission is that He wanted the Father to be glorified. The question for us is, do you desire to glorify the Father?

Christ Will Cast Out Satan (v 31). The second benefit of Christ’s submission to the point of death on the cross is given in verse 31.

Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. John 12:31 (NASB)

Notice that Jesus chose the word “world” and not “earth.” The Greek word for earth, *ge*, refers to the planet on which we live. But the Greek word for “world” refers to the world system or the satanic system that exists on this earth, *ge*. That is, judgment had come upon the satanic world system and specifically upon Satan himself.

But what did Jesus mean that judgment had come? John 3:19-20 explains the concept in a general sense.

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. John 3:19-20 (NASB)

When Jesus was born upon the *ge*, that brought judgment upon the satanic world system because Jesus came as the Light of the world (John 1:4-10). The people would be forced to either accept or reject Him. Those who rejected Jesus condemned themselves. Those who believed in Jesus accepted Him. They judged themselves by their own choice. How people responded to Christ’s death and resurrection was and is also an act of judgment upon them.

But the judgment to which Christ referred was also specific. When Jesus said “the ruler of this world will be cast out,” He referred to His victory over Satan. For 1 Peter 3:18-19 reveals that after Christ’s death He visited the demons in the abyss and announced victory! This was victory over Satan and his evil empire. Hebrew 2:14 states that Christ rendered the devil powerless, and stripped the devil of his ability to make people fearful of death. Romans 16:20 says that Satan will soon be crushed. Revelation 12:9-10 prophesies that the devil will be cast down from heaven during the seven-year tribulation. This is great news for us because 1 John 5:19 says that the whole world system is still in the power of the evil one, but it will not always belong to him and not for very long. 2 Corinthians 4:4 adds that

Satan has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they do not understand the gospel and reject Christ. So, Christ’s statement is wonderful news. His submission to the Father by enduring “this hour” would lead to victory over Satan. So, the second benefit of Christ’s submission to the Father is that Satan would be cast out.

Christ Will Draw All Men (v 32-33). The third benefit of Christ’s submission to the Father is that all men would be drawn to Christ. Jesus said,

“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.” John 12:32-33 (NASB)

Now we do not have to guess about the meaning of Jesus’ statement, “lifted up from the earth.” He had already told the disciples that He would be lifted up just as the snake was in the wilderness by Moses. John 3:14-15 says,

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. John 3:14-15 (NASB)

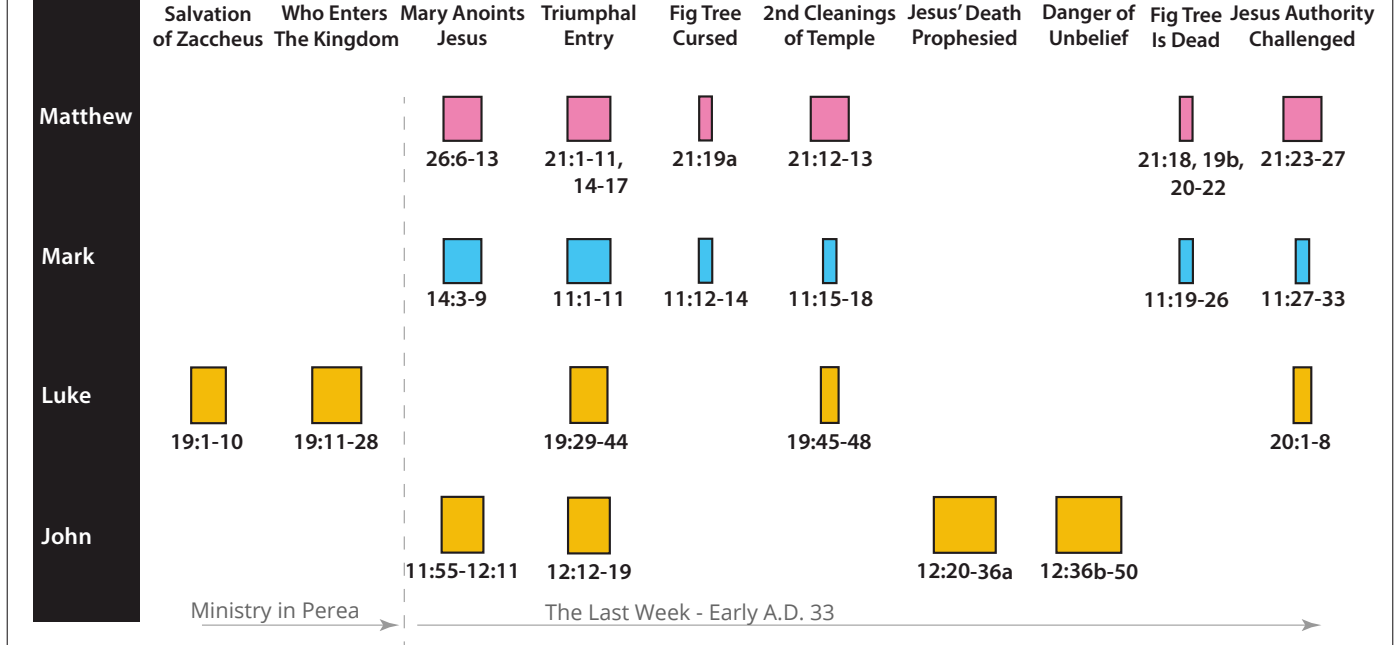
You might remember that Moses had raised up a fiery serpent that was wrapped around a standard in the wilderness (Numbers 21:7-9). This occurred because Israel had sinned in the wilderness. As an act of discipline, God sent snakes to bite them. But if they would look on the serpent raised up on the standard, they would be healed. That is, those who were dying could be saved by looking on the snake. That was an illustration of what happens to anyone who believes on Jesus. In a figurative sense, anyone who looks on Jesus is saved too! For Jesus said, “So that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.” Later, He also told the Pharisees,

“When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He.” John 8:28 (NASB)

So, when we are told, “But He was saying this to indicate the

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kind of death by which He was to die”, we should understand that Jesus was referring to His death on the cross.

But what did Jesus mean by “will draw all men to Myself”? The answer is that He did not mean that everyone would become a Christian. He did not mean all men and women would be saved. Why? Because He has already told us in the Parable of the Wide and Narrow road (Matthew 7:13-14) that very few people would find the road that leads to eternal life. In the Parable of the Sower of the Seed (Matthew 13:3-23), He described four soils, but only one soil of the four produced fruit, that is, fruit that objectively revealed the person was saved. Only one of the four soils was good. That helps us understand that there are not very many people on the narrow road and there are not very many “good soils.”

The Parable of the Tares (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43) reveals that not everyone will be saved because the tares are called the “sons of the evil one.” The evil one is the devil. The Parable of the Dragnet (Matthew 13:47-52) reveals that the wicked will be thrown into the “furnace of fire,” that is, hell or the lake of fire. There they will suffer for eternity. In

Matthew 18:8-9, Jesus taught hell is a fiery place and people will be thrown into it. Jesus’ point is that everyone is not going to heaven. In Luke 10:13-15, Jesus announced that people would be thrown into Hades or hell.

In John 6:65, Jesus taught that only those whom the Father chose to be saved will be saved. He will save only those whom the Father has granted to come to Jesus. In John 6:44, Jesus said no one can come to the Father without His permission. John 6:37 states that those whom the Father gives to Him will come. So, it is not possible that the Father draws everyone to Jesus as some claim. So, what did Jesus mean by He will draw all men after He is crucified?

Since everyone will not be saved, and everyone will not be drawn to Him, Jesus must mean that all types of people will be drawn to Him. He will draw both Jews and Gentile. That includes some of all people groups! It includes both the rich and the poor, citizens and leaders of all nations and races. Anyone and everyone who trusts Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins, repents of their sins, and submits to Him will be saved. That is, the third benefit of Christ’s submission to the Father is that “all men” would be drawn

to Christ.

Men Can Become Sons of Light (v 34-36).

Then we are told,

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?” John 12:34 (NASB)

Now we are told the crowd asked Jesus several questions. Before we examine their questions, notice that they understood the expression “Son of Man” referred to the Messiah or to the Christ because Jesus had just said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He.” Then they used the word “Christ” or Messiah. This is a great example of Scripture interpreting Scripture. It is clear that the term “Son of Man” refers to the Messiah (Daniel 7:13). They correctly understood the Messiah would reign forever because the Davidic Covenant promised that a descendant of King David would reign forever (2 Samuel 7:13, 16; Isaiah 9:6-7; Ezekiel 37:25).

It is also clear that they understood that they would crucify the Messiah. But that did not stop them from crucifying Jesus.

The crowd’s second question was, “Who is this Son of Man?” That comment reveals they did not know or believe Jesus was the Messiah. The crowd failed to understand the event that would occur in four days.

So, how did Jesus respond? He said to them,

“The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” John 12:35-36 (NASB)

When Jesus said, “The light is among you for a little while longer,” He was referring to Himself because John 1:4 says that Jesus is the Light of men. In John 8:12 He said, “I am the Light of the world.” Earlier in John 9:5, He said,

“While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.” John 9:5 (NASB)

Now what did Jesus mean by, “Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you.” The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.”? The answer is found by realizing that Jesus is the Light and the domain of darkness is Satan’s domain. 2 Corinthians 11:14 teaches us that Satan pretends to be an angel of Light. Acts 26:18 tells us when a person becomes a believer they,

. . . turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God. Acts 26:18 (NASB)

So, the only way a person can avoid being overtaken and know where they are going is to escape from the darkness. Unbelievers walk in the darkness and they are followers of Satan.

Jesus’ third statement explains how a person can escape the darkness. He said, “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” That is, by believing in Him, a person can become a son of light. Then they can walk in the Light. John 3:19-21 describes those who do not believe in the Light and those who do believe in the Light.

“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” John 3:19-21 (NASB)

The gospel message is that those who believe in Jesus are the sons of light. To believe in Christ means that a person believes Jesus is our Savior from sin, was crucified and died, was resurrected, and then ascended back to heaven (1 Corinthians 15:1-8). Saving faith will include repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10) and submission to Christ (Romans 10:9).

The result is forgiveness of our sins and eternal life (John 3:16).

This gives us the fourth benefit of Christ's submission to the Father. People can become sons of light by believing in the Light who is Jesus Christ the Messiah-King.

Conclusion. We have learned four benefits of Christ's submission to God the Father. He glorified the Father. Satan was cast out. All types of men would be drawn to Him, and men can become sons of the Light by believing in Christ. All of these benefits were realized four days later when He humbly submitted to the Father by willingly dying on the cross. If Christ had not submitted to the Father on that Monday, we would be in our sins and going to hell. When He pleaded, "Father, save Me from this hour" we should rejoice that He added, "But for this purpose I came to this hour." It was by His submission that He made it possible for you and me to become sons of the light. Are you a son of the Light? I trust that you are. Otherwise, you are walking in darkness.