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Text: John 12:27-36

What attracts people and gets their attention? The big, the famous, the spectacular. And the bigger, the more famous, the more spectacular, the better and the bigger the crowds, it seems.

But the opposite is true at times as well. When there is a horrible accident on the highway, it draws people's attention. When tragedy strikes, people will tune into the news and watch the reports about it for hours on end. People will come to vigils for people they did not know because they get swept up in the emotion of the moment.

But what about Jesus? He said that *when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself*. His lifting up was the cross. So why is He a draw there? Because of the spectacle? Such a big, famous, spectacular crucifixion? Or is it because of the gore, such a horrible thing to happen to such a good guy?

It is neither. The cross of Jesus doesn't draw us on its own. On its own, it was just one of thousands of crucifixions performed by the Romans in the first century. Rather, Jesus says: *I* will draw all people to myself. He is the one who will do it. Because He wants you to know Him there. He wants you to know the love of God for you there, and the life and forgiveness He wins for you there.

And so Jesus draws you to the cross through His Word and the Spirit that works through that Word. His Word that says this is **for you**. He would not ask His Father to save Him from this hour. He goes for you. He dies for you. That you may live. That when the final judgment comes, you will not be cast out but welcomed into the eternal mansions of heaven, where there is no darkness, only light - but not the light of the sun or the moon, but the light of the Lamb (Rev 21:23).

He is the light that would be among them for only a little while longer. The hour of darkness, of evil, of the cross would soon come. But just as the darkness could not overcome Him, so it will not overcome you. The darkness of your sin is scattered by the light of Christ's forgiveness. So repent and receive this light. The light that shines so brightly from the cross. And walk in that light. For you are sons of light, not of darkness. *So let not your souls be troubled*. Jesus is lifted up for you, that you be lifted up with Him, to heaven, forever.

In the Name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.