

LOSE IT

John 12:25 **2 KEEP IT**

Introduction: Jesus came to save the world! He came to change this world, and His life, death, and resurrection brought about the greatest impact this world has ever seen!

Consider the following Scripture:

- John the Baptist said, *“Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.”* (John 1:29)
- Jesus said, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16)
- The men of Samaria said, *“Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the savior of the world.”* (John 4:42)

- Jesus taught, *“For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”* (John 6:33)
- Jesus also said, *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.”* (John 8:12)

Did Jesus make a difference in this world? Yes! Turn in your Bible to John 12:19. We read,

“The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him.”

Underline the words, *“Look, the world has gone after Him.”* I believe that those are some of the greatest words found in the New Testament. Apparently a whole lot of people were going after Jesus.

This passage of Scripture is encouraging us to go after Jesus, and to follow His example by making a difference in our world. How can we do this today?

I. Seek Jesus – v. 20-21

²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹ Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

I find it fascinating that in verse 19, we read that the world has gone after Him, and then as we come to verse 20, the Greeks came to worship at the feast, and said to Philip,

"Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

We don't read it in our English Bible, but in the Greek language these words are in continuous action – they keep requesting to see Jesus. These Greeks wanted to spend some time communicating with Jesus.

Bible teachers believe that these Greeks represent all of the pagan nations. Other say that they are possibly proselytes – they did come to worship. I have read that Greeks were the wanderers of the ancient world. That they were seekers of truth. Wiersbe says that these mentioned here in our text may have been "God fearers".

Evidently, they had heard about Jesus, and now they came and they wished to see Jesus. This denotes that they wanted to have a conversation with Jesus.

There is not a man, a woman, a boy or a girl present today that does not need to seek Jesus. Why not seek Jesus like the ancient world did!

You must not only seek Jesus, but you must...

II. Know Jesus – v. 22-23

²² Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. ²³ But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified."

It really is who you know in life that matters! **Do you know Jesus?** Philip and Andrew took the request of the Greeks directly to Jesus. Keep in mind that the popularity of Jesus was great, and that many people were seeking Him (I refer you back to verse 19). Look at the way that Jesus answered them. He said in verse 23,

"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified."

It's what you know about Jesus that also matters. Like, do you know that Jesus had an appointed "hour" in which He would be glorified? It's not enough just to seek Jesus, you must also know Jesus. What do you really know about Jesus? Allow me to break

down these words of Jesus for us. Here is what Jesus taught us about Himself:

- *The hour has come* –

Throughout the Gospel of John Jesus spoke of His hour (go and do a study on the word “hour” in John’s Gospel). His hour had the greatest impact the world has ever seen.

The “hour” here is not sixty minutes. The word literally is speaking about His determined time, or the fixed time in which He would accomplish the greatest task – redemption for humanity.

- *Son of Man* –

I have read that this was the way that Jesus loved to address Himself. In those three words He identified with humanity. Jesus took on Human flesh to know us, and through His humanity we get to know Him.

I would challenge you to read through the Gospel’s in 2019, so that you can learn more about the person of Jesus Christ.

- *Glorified* –

Instead of Jesus speaking about His crucifixion, He spoke of His glorification. Jesus knew that the cross was His moment to glorify His Father, and at the same time to provide eternal redemption for humanity.

Seek Jesus, know Jesus, and...

III. Follow Jesus – v. 24-26

How do we follow Jesus today? There are three steps each one of us must take. They are:

A. You must die – v. 24

²⁴ Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

The words “*Most assuredly*” literally means that what we are about to read is very important. Some Bible uses the words, verily, verily, or truly, truly. They speak of importance.

This verse is actually teaching us about what Jesus Christ was about to do. He was going to die in the place of all humanity. He

was going to become our substitution – Jesus was going to take our place on the cross. He would die for you and for me. He would die for all mankind.

And because He was willing to die, his death produced much fruit. Are you aware that over 2 billion people today claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, and people are being added to that number daily.

When a seed is placed in the ground it dies, but in its death a harvest follows. This was true of Jesus' death, and please hear this, it would be true of our death as well. Are we willing to die to self and live for God?

Ultimate surrender is dying to self and living for Jesus Christ.

B. You must hate your life – v. 25

²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

It is from this verses that I have drawn our church theme for 2019 – **Lose it 2 Keep it**. Those words are found right here in this verse. Underline the words:

- **Lose it**
- **Keep it**

In this verse there are two Greek words for “life”. The first is “psuche” and it means, present existence. The other is “Zoe” and it means, spiritual life. We should hate our present existence and love our spiritual life.

I would like to challenge us to commit to memory John 12:25. I want to challenge each one of us to make this our life’s theme for 2019.

John Piper, a retired Baptist preacher explains John 12:25 this way, “Here the destination is eternal life. And you can miss it by loving your life – that is, by making your goal in life to be safe and secure and comfortable and surrounded only by pleasant things. That is the pathway to perishing. Or, Jesus says, you can take another path and arrived at eternal life. That path is called hating your life in this world. Notice that he adds “*in this world.*” Hating your life in this world means that you will deny yourself things, and take risks, embrace the path of suffering for the sake of love. This, Jesus says, will lead to eternal life, not death. (“Where I Am”).

What does it mean to love his life? The Bible Knowledge Commentary reads: On the other hand, **the man who loves his life will lose it.** Anything in life can become an idol including goals, interests, and loves (cf. Luke 12:16-21; 18:18-30). A believer should undergo a spiritual death to self (Romans 6:1-14; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 6:14).

What does it mean to hate this life? Again, the Bible Knowledge Commentary reads: To "hate his life" means to be so committed to Christ that he has no self-centeredness, no concern for himself.

In 2019, I am calling all of us as believers to **Lose it** (hate our lives) to keep it (eternal life). We must in this coming year discover and hold dear the things that are eternal. Live for eternity. Live for what will matter most. The temporal will pass away, but that which is eternal lasts forever.

C. You must serve Jesus – v. 26

²⁶ If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

I want you to mark your Bible, and at the same time I believe that the Bible will forever mark you. If you want your life to matter for eternity than you must choose today whom you will serve. Mark the following words in verse 26,

- **Serves Me**
- **My Servant**
- **Serves Me**

Often time we are under the impression that we are serving others, when in reality ultimately, we are serving Jesus Christ! Him alone. All our service begins and end here – with serving Jesus Christ.

- Men and women when you serve your employer you are really serving Jesus Christ.
- Husbands when you provide leadership in your home you are serving Jesus Christ.
- Wives and mothers when you serve your husbands and children you are really serving Jesus Christ.
- When you teach a Sunday school class full of 3 graders you are serving Jesus Christ.
- When you play or sing on the worship team you are serving Jesus Christ.
- When you preach, you are really serving Jesus Christ.
- When you give a cup of cold water, or warm meal to someone poor you are really serving Jesus Christ.

All things are to be done for Jesus Christ alone. We serve Him!

Life Application Bible reads, “To serve and follow Jesus means making radical life-style changes. What about your goals, interests, hobbies, career choices, habits? To follow Jesus means going the way he went—not the way of earthly power and honor—but the way of humility and death. Everything Jesus did was for God's glory. When we choose to follow him, we must live

for God's glory alone. This does not mean we have no fun, no joy, no security. Rather, it simply means *all that we do is for God's glory alone*. Then God will honor us; then, and only then, will we follow Jesus where he goes—as he explains later, he goes to eternal life with the Father.”

We also read in this verse the words, “*follow Me*”. What do these words mean? They can mean to “imitate Me” or “do what I do, love what I love.” Those two words are a call to radical discipleship. Make 2019 a year of Radical Discipleship. **Step out – Step over – Step in – Step up** in 2019 for Jesus Christ.

There are so many promises connected with serving Jesus Christ. Can you spot them in verse 26? Here they are:

- 1. His Example**
- 2. His Presence**
- 3. His Honor**

As we live to serve, we receive some great and wonderful benefits.

Conclusion: Jesus understood how to make a lasting contribution to this world. He understood His purpose, the reason for His very being. Do we?

If we want to impact this world and leave a lasting legacy, then we must take the three steps outlined in this passage of Scripture:

- 1. Seek Jesus – v. 20-21**
- 2. Know Jesus – v. 22-23**
- 3. Serve Jesus – v. 24-26**

And furthermore, we must be willing to lose it (our very lives) to keep it (all that matters for eternity). Who will we live for? Jesus Christ or self?