

## LIFTING UP JESUS

**“But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.” He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.” (John 12:32-33)**

There is no question about it, the “lifting up of Jesus” referred to His crucifixion. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, Jesus also had to be lifted up. You remember the story. The Lord sent snakes to bite the people in the wilderness because of their sins. The King James Version calls them “fiery serpents” because apparently their deadly bites felt like burning coals. Here is the miraculous cure that God provided: **“The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.” (Num 21:8-9)**

The cure was not as easy as it might first appear. First, there was only one bronze snake for the whole nation. This means that mortally wounded people may have had to travel a considerable distance to see the bronze snake and be healed. Second, it would not be easy to look up and focus on a bronze snake when you wanted to look down and try to avoid the real ones.

Nevertheless, this was the only cure available for those sinners. No matter how far away the serpent was, no matter how difficult it was to trust the cure, this was the only way to be saved. Jesus said that just as those sinners had to focus on the bronze snake in order to be saved, we also must focus on Him in order to be saved. This, as you know, also requires concentration and discipline. We are not saved by our own agility and cleverness, but by focusing on Jesus. Paul emphasized this to the Corinthians when he wrote: **“When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.” (1 Cor 2:1-5)**

Gravity, as you know, is an invisible force that tends to draw all objects toward the center of the earth. Many objects, however, are so firmly attached that they defy the force of gravity. For example, there are two light fixtures in my office. The force of gravity is drawing them toward the center of the earth, but they do not move because they are firmly attached to the ceiling. The application of this principle is obvious. Just because Jesus is drawing all men does not mean that all men will come to Him. Some are so firmly attached to the things of earth that they even resist the drawing power of Jesus.

There is nothing more central to your salvation than focusing on Jesus. Charles H. Spurgeon expressed this truth by observing: “I looked at Jesus and the dove of peace flew into my heart. I looked at the dove of peace and it flew away.” Christ in you is the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man can come to the Father but by Him (John 14:6). He is the “one mediator between God and men” (1 Tim 2:5). The ancient Jews searched the Scriptures but refused to come to Christ that they might have life (John 5:40). Please don’t make that mistake! If you are right about Jesus you can be wrong about a lot of other things and still be saved. If you are wrong about Jesus it doesn’t matter how many other things you are right about. Jesus has been lifted up! He is drawing all men to Himself. Please let go of the things of earth that you might come to Christ and be saved.

Here are eloquent words about Christ from the breastplate of Saint Patrick.

**“Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me! Christ below me, Christ above me. Christ at my right, Christ at my left! Christ in breadth, Christ in length, Christ in height! Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me!”**

