

# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



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## The Drawing Power of the Gospel

The gospel message contains a wide range of historical and theological material that should attract our attention. But one event lies at the foundation of all the rest.

*“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn. 6:44).*

*“Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” This He said, signifying by what death He would die” (Jn. 12:31-33).*

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In both of these passages, Jesus refers to people being *drawn* to Him. The Greek word describes a powerful force pulling on an object, such as a magnet *pulling* a piece of iron (Kittel), or a ship *towing* a smaller craft (Moulton & Milligan), or a fisherman *dragging* a net full of fish to shore (Jn. 21:11). The object doing the drawing is always more powerful than the object being drawn.

The motive of the object doing the drawing is not always sinister. For example, the same word is used in the Septuagint version of Jer. 31:3, “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have *drawn* you.” Despite Judah’s rebellious

spirit, God still loved His people, and worked to secure their affection.

With that background, look again at these two passages. Together, they present a picture of how God saves mankind. They describe Jesus as the agent (or magnet) by which God exerts His drawing power upon men. More specifically, that drawing power was exercised when Jesus was “lifted up from the earth, . . . signifying by what death He would die.”

Let’s cut to the chase here: *The drawing power of the gospel is the death of Jesus on the cross.* When people finally understand the meaning of the death of Christ—the voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God for them, despite their imperfections—a powerful force deep in the human psyche is awakened, transforming their wills and their lives.

That act of love attracts people in a way that cannot be achieved by any other means. For example, Jesus’ *resurrection* is hugely important; it validated His claims, and even today provides a solid foundation for our faith. But the resurrection of Christ is not what tugs at our hearts and draws us to Him.

Jesus’ *ethical teaching* is far superior to any other standard of conduct, and has had an enormous influence on humanity. But for all its beauty, that teaching is not what draws men to Him.

Nor is it the power of the sword, nor the temptation of the purse, nor even the threat of hell that attracts people to Jesus. All these approaches may bring people to Christ—after a fashion—but they have serious side effects that, in one way or another, poison the nature of our service to Him. We are not *driven* to Christ; we are *drawn* to Him. And it is His vicarious death for an undeserving race that makes His story so powerful.

After his Damascus road experience, Paul saw Jesus in an entirely different light. From that moment forward, the savage persecutor no longer saw Jesus as an imposter, but as the one who “loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). That new perspective radically changed his life, and drew him to his Savior with a bond so tight that no force on heaven or earth could break it. Our own thinking and teaching should rest on that same foundation.

– David King