Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Traitor's Kiss Part 1
Scripture: Matthew 26:47-50a
Code: 2387

We now come to the time of the study of God's Word and we are again drawn to the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew. And for this morning, we want to begin an examination of verses 47 through 56, Matthew chapter 26 beginning at verse 47. This particular portion is one that generates in my heart tremendous amount of emotion, tremendous feelings of, I suppose, anger on the one hand and love on the other, of a desire for revenge on the one hand and yet complete trust in the plan of God on the other, because this passage relates to us the act of betrayal and the arrest of Jesus Christ. And there are things in that that anger me, I trust with a holy indignation that the Son of God should be so treated. The kiss of Judas is a despicable and ugly and repulsive act. Everything about it is distasteful, demeaning, unfair, unjust to the blessed Son of God.

And so, there wells within me a certain amount of indignation, a certain amount of anger, a certain desire for vengeance but on the other hand, Christ is so perfectly calm in the midst of the unfolding of the redemptive plan of God that I find comfort in His own comfort and trust. If there is a more ugly or repulsive word in the English language than the word "traitor," it has to be the proper name Judas. And we now come to that text in which we are face to face with Judas the traitor. And the man of sorrows who is so acquainted with grief faces another profound and deep experience of pain as He is betrayed by one of His own disciples and arrested to be executed on a cross.

It is a narrative passage and as we go through this narrative, we find ourselves drawn into the sadness of the scene, the drama of the scene, the tragedy of it as well as the triumph. And as I meditated on this passage for the last couple of weeks, trying to identify a way that we could take ourselves through this and grasp the deep meaning of it, it seemed as though the best way might be to just identify the varying participants in the scene. And as we look at each one as the scene unfolds, we find ourselves able to grasp what is happening. And so we want to examine the attack of the crowd, the kiss of the traitor, the defeat of the disciples and the triumph of the Savior.

We begin at verse 47 with the attack of the crowd. "And while He yet spoke, behold Judas, one of the Twelve, came and with him a great multitude with swords and clubs from the chief priests and elders of the people." Matthew, Mark and Luke all say the same thing. They all say that while Jesus was speaking, the mob arrived. And so we want to ask the question, what was He saying? What was He speaking about? And we need only to remind ourselves of what has gone on before to be able easily to identify that. Let me give you the setting briefly.

On Thursday, our Lord arose in the morning with the disciples and sent them to prepare for the Passover feast to be held Thursday night. All preparation was done and Thursday after sunset, He with His disciples in a borrowed upper room in the house of a disciple who is unnamed, celebrated the Passover. There He washed the disciples' feet. There He taught them many, many things recorded in John 13 through 16. There He prayed for them in the great high priestly prayer of John 17. There He instituted His own supper, the Lord's table, communion. And near midnight of that Thursday night, with His disciples, He left the upper room, headed out of the city. They ascended up the Mount of Olives. A little way up the Mount of Olives they stopped and He taught them that they were going to be facing a terrible trial. And when it came, they wouldn't be able to stand it and they would defect and they would abandon Him. They denied it, but it came to pass.

It is still Thursday night. And now they have reached a familiar spot, the garden of Gethsemane, a garden belonging also to a resident of Jerusalem, no doubt a follower of Jesus, a garden which was at the disposal of Jesus to use on any occasion which He desired. And He went there very often with His disciples, John tells us that. And He finds Himself there again. As He and the eleven go in, because Judas has long since been dismissed, even from before the Lord's table was instituted and is busy setting up the betrayal, there are only eleven now, and as He enters into the gate of the garden of Gethsemane, He tells eight of the disciples to stay at the very entrance. And they are left there. And He takes three with Him, Peter, James and John, deeper into the garden in a more secluded place. And then He leaves them and goes alone to pray. And so there are eight to watch and pray at the gate. There are three a little further to watch and pray and be sure the Lord has some time alone.

He goes into pray and He has three great sessions of prayer because Satan came at Him in three great waves of temptation. Satan wanted to distract Him from the cross. Satan wanted to do anything He could do to divert Him from dying the redemptive death of the Lamb of God who would die for the sins of the world. The prayer time is over. Sadly, the disciples--instead of praying--slept through it all, wearied no doubt by a busy week, a busy day, a huge meal, a long walk. They slept instead of praying.

And after that third session of prayer, the Lord comes back, would you notice in verse 45? Then He comes to His disciples and says to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go toward them. Behold, he is near that does betray Me." And it while He is saying that, awakening them from their sleep, rousing them not to run but to go toward the betrayer and the crowd that He now can see moving along the trail in the Mount of Olives with torches burning in the night, as He speaks to them to rise and move forward, we pick up verse 47, "And while He was still speaking..." it all is happening so suddenly, so fast, "Behold, or lo."

Matthew says, "Look, Judas is here." Judas, one of the twelve, it says. Quite an interesting statement. Judas, one of the twelve. That is a common designation for Judas...one of the twelve. At first when you look at it it doesn't seem like anything very special, but it is repeated so often you get the idea that it is special. In Mark 14:10, "And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve." And in verse 20, "And He answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve that dips with Me in the dish." And verse 43 of Mark 14, "And immediately while He yet spoke cometh Judas, one of the twelve." And Luke says it in chapter 22 verse 3, "Judas, one of the twelve." And verse 47, "Judas, one of the twelve."

And we get the feeling that this particular designation of Judas carries with it a certain amount of disdain. Frankly, the Bible writers are rather kind in the way they speak about Judas. They could say other things, couldn't they? Judas, that wretched, vile, vulgar, repulsive traitor, but they don't. They are restrained. They are much more restrained than other extra- biblical writers in history. After this period of time there were books written that we know as apocryphal books, that is they were religious books written along biblical themes and about biblical personalities, but were not inspired by the Holy Spirit. But as we read these books, we get a feeling for how the people of that time felt about Judas because many of these apocryphal books and letters talk about Judas with tremendous disdain and hatred.

For example, there is an apocryphal writing entitled "The Story of Joseph of Arimathaea," and it teaches that Judas was the son of the brother of Caiaphas, the high priest. And that Judas--by design--was sent to infiltrate the disciples, become one of the followers as a spy and nothing more with the deliberate intent of bringing to pass a scheme for the destruction of Jesus.

In another apocryphal writing called "The Acts of Pilate," there is teaching that Judas went home immediately after betraying Christ and he found his wife roasting a chicken. And he told his wife that he was planning to kill himself because he was so afraid that Jesus would rise from the dead and come after him. His wife at that time replied, according to the Acts of Pilate, this ancient treatise, that Jesus would no more rise from the dead than the chicken she was roasting would jump out of the fire and crow...at which very instant, the chicken did exactly that. And Judas instantly went out and hanged himself.

There is another very interesting ancient manuscript called "The Coptic Narratives of the Ministry and Passion," and it teaches that Judas' wife was greedy for money and she set up the whole thing to get money and he was nothing but a pawn for his greedy manipulating dominating wife. And if you know anything about that culture, you would know that for a man to be esteemed as the servant of a dominating wife was the ultimate slander.

In a twelfth century writing called "The Legendary Aura," it tells us that Judas was cast into the sea by his parents when he was young. They set him afloat somehow. He survived their throwing him away,

apparently the intention of the writer is to indicate that he was even a distasteful child and they couldn't think of anything better to do with him then to throw him in the ocean. And years later he arrived back in the land of Palestine and wound up serving Pontius Pilate. At that particular time, he met and married a beautiful woman and discovered after their marriage that she was his mother. And the basis of all his problems then was an Oedipus complex.

Now this is fictitious but it gives you a feeling for how people within the church looked at Judas. In Cramer's(?) Catana(?), another writing, it says that Judas after betraying Christ got a disease, a severe disease and he became so swollen with inflamation that a wagon could pass through a gate that Judas couldn't pass through. His head became so swollen that the physicians couldn't find his eyes. Worms and corruption began to proceed from his body and the place where he died had to be avoided totally because of the terrible stench. Another ancient writing says that he was killed when he was crushed by a wagon in such a way that his body burst.

Now the point of all of that is to say to you that throughout the early history of the church there was terrible hatred of this man Judas. And it shows up in the writings of these fictitious descriptions of his death. But when you look at the Bible writers, there's none of that. All they ever say about this man is that he was one of the twelve. And that statement, rather than carrying just pure disdain and repulsiveness has built into it a certain kind of profound mystery, doesn't it. It's almost as if they are saying it is impossible to believe it but this man who betrayed Jesus was one of the twelve. In other words, he knew Him more intimately than any other human beings on the face of the earth and still did this. It's almost as if they're saying it is inconceivable to imagine, but he was one of the twelve. And so, rather than statements of aversion or repulsion, there are statements of wonder and shock...one of the twelve.

It is early Friday morning when he arrives, this Judas...after midnight. He has already gotten all the people together to bring the final plot to a climax. He had left long ago the presence of the disciples. John 13:30 says he went out and it was night and he went out before the Lord's table was even instituted. And upon leaving, we learn in the Scripture, that he went out and consummated his agreement with the Jewish leaders. He had already contracted with them for money...he said, "How much will you give me if I give you Jesus?" The deal was set and he went and collected them, got them together, said this is the moment, you've got to act with speed, this is the night. It is quiet, it is the time, it is the moment, take advantage of the night, take advantage of the fact that Jesus is away from the crowds, He has gone in the private place with His disciples, He is alone with them, this is the best time.

He is also pressed by greed. He is so hungry for money that he is running fast to get it. He is possessed by Satan so he no longer is in control of what he does, for the Bible says, "Satan entered into Judas." And he has gone under the compulsion of his inordinate greed. He has gone under the compulsion of Satanic indwelling and he has collected the leaders and the soldiers and they all now

come to capture Christ. And there in the garden they arrive. And he wants his money. He wants his pound of flesh. He wants his compensation for what he believes are wasted years of poverty following a Messiah who is not going to bring a Kingdom and exalt him to the glory that he had hoped for. Believe me, it's been a frantic few hours since he left that upper room on Thursday night.

He ran to the Jewish leaders. He had to meet with them. And then they had to get permission from the Romans. I believe that there was very likely a meeting with Pilate himself. Pilate was in Jerusalem at this time, as we know from the events, although his main palace was in Caesarea from where he ruled that particular area under the Roman Emperor Caesar. But Pilate was aware. In chapter 27 of Matthew and verses 62 to 65, "Now on the next day, it says the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate saying, Sir, we remember that the deceiver said while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again." And they don't identify Christ anymore than as the deceiver. And it indicates to me that they must have had some prior conversation with Pilate to identify who this was.

So he has to collect the Jewish leaders, get permission from Pilate and therefore he must have been able somehow to get everybody to convince Pilate and they would willingly have done it, the Jewish leaders, that this Jesus was a potential insurrectionist, a potential rebel, a terrorist, a real problem for Rome and that He was going to lead some kind of insurrection against Rome. And they were not anxious for another one of these things to take place, they had just finished putting one down. In Mark chapter 15, do you remember it says there was one named Barabbas who lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection? Barabbas was the leader of a terrorist revolution against the Romans. And they had just put that down and put Barabbas in prison. And they see Jesus as another potential Barabbas. And the Romans would be sold a bill of goods by the Jewish leaders that Jesus was going to lead a revolution against Rome and they better stop it before it got started.

And so, on that pretence, the Roman soldiers join the Jewish leaders under the leadership of Judas and they proceed to the garden to take Jesus captive. It may well have been that the upper room was scouted first to see if Jesus was still there with His disciples. And when it was determined that He was no longer there, Judas knew where He would go. And that made it so very simple because the garden of Gethsemane was outside the city. It was dark. They could proceed there without being necessarily disruptive.

And in fact, Roman soldiers were everywhere. The Romans had brought in extra troops for the Passover and so to see an entourage of Roman soldiers marching through the city wouldn't be particularly disturbing. To see a group of Jewish leaders and Sanhedrinists all together wouldn't be disturbing because this was a high and holy season. And if they convened outside the gate together, it may have well been that the populace wouldn't have known what was going on. And so it seemed the moment was there. It was in the mind of Judas, it was in the mind of Satan, it was in the mind of the religious leaders, it was in the mind of the Romans, and, believe me, it was in the plan of God...for

what they were doing was being done by the determinant council and foreknowledge of God, it says in Acts chapter 2.

So, here comes Judas...Satan possessed and yet on a God- ordained mission. Now with him, would you notice, came a great multitude...a crowd, a large crowd. Now we want to find out who this crowd is so we read further. "Chief priests and elders of the people." The chief priests, as you know, were those who led the religious activity of Israel. The elders were representatives from the people who ruled. It is a combination of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel, and the priesthood, the chief priests. It would be made up of Sadducees and Pharisees. They were all there. It is important to remember this, it was the Jewish leaders and the Jewish rulers who were behind all of this. That cannot be denied. That does not mean that all the Jewish people in the nation wanted to be a part of it. It does not mean that they all were anymore than just led along by their leaders. It doesn't mean it was their purpose and desire, but they became victimized by their leadership, but it was the Jewish leaders, unquestionably. In fact, in John 18:3 it says there was a band or a cohort and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees. So the Sadducees were there, they were the chief priests, the Pharisees, for the most part made up the regular priesthood, and then the Sanhedrinists as well. All of them were there.

The sum of that would be several hundred. The high priest was there because a little later we meet the servant of the high priest who would be a very very important person, who would be the adjutant to the high priest, the highest religious office in the land.

Now in John 18:3, it says there was a band. It uses the word "band" in the authorized version. The Greek is speiran. Nowspeiran is an interesting word. It basically means a cohort of soldiers. And aspeiran is one-tenth of a legion in the Roman army, one-tenth of a legion. Now a legion is six thousand men. So one tenth of that is six hundred men. A legion at full strength, 6,000. A band at full strength, 600. Add to that several hundred priests, 70 perhaps from the Sanhedrin and you're approaching a thousand people who are marching up the side of the Mount of Olives. You add officers and servants, you have a large group. And all of these Roman soldiers were coming because they were under the impression that this man was a rebel, a revolutionary, a terrorist, an insurrectionist like Barabbas.

Now the band of Romans would be under the command of a chiliarch who would be higher than what we know as a colonel. They would have been stationed at Fort Antonia, you can still walk on the floor of Fort Antonia if you go to Israel, it's there just north of the temple ground. The leaders were all there. Chief priests, Luke 22:52 says, captains of the temple, that would be the temple police, that adds another group, and the elders, they were all there. And John says they came with lanterns and torches to see their way through the night. But more than that, because it was full moon, the month began with new moon, Passover was in the middle of the month so it would be full moon. And the full moon in that part of the world is very bright and yet they came with lanterns and torches because they

perhaps assumed they would have to have a chase and a hunt to dig Jesus out of a cave or a hiding place. So, they came to take the conspirator, to take him by force if need be with a thousand men.

Now go back to verse 47. We read that they also had swords and clubs...swords and clubs. The word sword is machaira, short swords, daggers, the kind described as carried by a Roman soldier. In fact, when Paul outlines the armor of a Christian in Ephesians 6, he uses the word machaira. They carried that small short sword, that dagger, as well as large broad swords for certain kinds of battle. They carried usually the large sword when they were going into an armed conflict with another army, they carried that small short dagger in an occasion like this to arrest this man they felt was a revolutionary.

And then you will notice, please, that it says they carried clubs, xylon. It literally means clubs, like a billy club, like a nightstick that a policeman would carry. That would be a regular weapon of the temple police. So the Jews were armed and the Romans were armed as well.

It's a shocking scene. It's absolutely a shocking scene. Instead of welcoming the Son of God, instead of embracing the long-awaited Messiah, instead of falling at the feet of one who was to be worshipped as the living Christ of God, they sent a group of vigilantes, a group of soldiers to beat Him into submission, to stab Him if need be, to take His life.

And as I looked at that scene and meditated on it, thought it over in my mind, I saw in it such a vivid illustration of the wickedness of the world. The wickedness of the world is never made more manifest than it is in the world's treatment of Jesus Christ, never. If you don't think the world is wicked, then ask yourself how it can reject the most spotless pure and wonderful and lovely person that ever walked on the earth? If this is not a wicked world, then tell me why it rejects the perfect one? There's never a greater illustration of the world's wickedness than this...Jew and Gentile alike who reject Christ.

Think of their wickedness. First of all, their wickedness is manifest in the fact that they are unjust...they are unjust. The world is unjust. Did they have a right to take Jesus Christ and kill Him? What crime had He done? And Pilate even later on says, "I find...what?...no fault in this man. I wash my hands of this affair." And Pilate was a man educated in jurisprudence and law. Christ had done nothing wrong. There was no crime. They are utterly unjust. They are utterly unfair. They are of their father who is a murderer, John 8:44 says, the devil. Their deeds against Jesus Christ have no relationship to truth, no relationship to equity, no relationship to fairness, to rightness, to goodness, to justice. They have no ability to recognize the one who is true and right and good. And that is what marks the Christ-rejecting world in every generation. Their rejection of Jesus Christ is unjust. And listen, when the world can reject the spotless, pure and lovely Son of God, it tells us they are wicked. Because righteousness and goodness would embrace righteousness and goodness, would it not?

And not only is the world unjust, but the world is mindless...the world is mindless. What did the soldiers in Rome have against Jesus Christ? What did they have against Him? Nothing, absolutely nothing. What did the priests who were being led by the nose under the direction of the high priest and chief priests who were intimidated by Christ, what did they have against Jesus? Nothing. Do you remember that it says in John's gospel, "Many of the priests believed on Him?" What did they have against Him? Absolutely nothing. The Roman soldiers had nothing against Him. He had not done anything to offend them.

The priests, what did they have against Him? Nothing. Were they to be the ones who cared for the people of Israel? Yes. Did Jesus assist them? Yes. Did He heal the diseases of their people? Yes. Did He restore their people to spiritual life? Yes. Did He teach their people divine truth? Yes. What did they have against Him? Nothing. But they are mindless, absolutely mindless. They are cut up in the mood of the mob. It just takes one aberrational perverted leader or two to decide there ought to be a plot against somebody to stir up an entire populous. They are as mindless as the people who followed Hitler or anybody else who leads them into some kind of evil act or acts. It is the mood of the mob. They sell themselves to emotion. They hate one they do not even know. They despise what they cannot even understand. They are hirelings of the high priest. They are bribed for the sake of acceptance, for the sake of saving their reputation, for the sake of preserving the peace they imagine cannot exist unless this is done.

O, I see the world like that today. Listen, there are people across our nation who reject Jesus Christ in just as mindless a way as these did. You better consider the claims of Christ yourself. You better know who it is you're rejecting. And there are people who would say, "Well, I can't receive Jesus Christ, I just don't buy any of that." And my standard response to them is, "Well, you must have studied deeply into the life of Christ to come to such an astute conclusion."

I always am amazed to hear people say, "Well, I'm not sure the Bible is even true." And then you simply ask them if they've read it and they will confess that they really haven't. Mindless, you following the mood of the mob? If the rest of the people around you reject Christ, are you going to do it, too? You're just as mindless as the Roman soldiers who came with their daggers, just as mindless as the priests who lined up behind the high priest to do things they didn't even understand. Don't be mindless, don't be bribed for acceptance sake. Don't become a victim of somebody else's bitterness or emotion or rejection of Christ. Don't you reject the blessed Son of God because somebody else did, somebody told you you should. The wicked world is mindless, unthinking.

Thirdly, as I look at the wickedness of the world in coming to Christ, I have to affirm that they are cowardly...they are cowardly...they are cowardly. A thousand men to take one Galilean, a thousand swords, clubs, torches in the dark of night? Listen, a guilty conscience makes a coward out of anybody. A guilty conscience always makes a coward. Wickedness always fears that it might get what it knows it deserves, you see...always. It wants to hear no truth. It plugs its ears. It shuns honest

confrontation. Where do we read that any one of these people came and talked to Jesus to find out whether He was an insurrectionist, to find out if in fact it was true or was He indeed the Messiah, the Son of God? But cowards come in big groups. They fear exposure. They come at night. They come only when the odds are overwhelmingly in their favor. They gang up on you. Have you noticed that? You can isolate an unbeliever from the support group of other unbelievers, from the mindless clan to which he belongs and he becomes instantly vulnerable. He finds protection in the horde and safety. And if he has amassed around him enough people who live like the way he does, he feels comfortable in his evil. He's not about to confront truth one on one, he hides in the cowardliness of the mob.

And that's how it is with the wicked world. They don't come to Christ individually. They don't want to be confronted. They gang up on Him.

Another thought, too, the wicked world is profane. The wicked world is profane. This strikes me so deeply. The world has absolutely no reverence for what is sacred...absolutely none. The world is so profane. Every time I hear the word Jesus uttered out of the mouth of someone as a curse word, I shudder at the profanity of the world. Every time God is mocked or Christ is mocked, or every time God's Word or God's way or God's will is disdained, every time Christ is rejected, it is the same profanity exhibited as here in this very garden where the world gangs up on Jesus Christ and profanes what is the most sacred thing in the universe, God Himself in human flesh. What blatant impiety. What unbelievable sacrilege was committed here to lay murderous sinful hands on the holy Lord. He says it in verse 45, "The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." What a profanity. What an indignity. What an impiety.

And it isn't any different today. This profane impious unholy world mocks Christ, takes Him in its hands, treats Him with indignity and disrespect. You see, the world is unjust. It is mindless. It is cowardly and it is profane. And all of these elements of evil that you see here in this garden, dear friends, have not since passed. You understand that? They have not since passed. The world is still the same. They're still coming into the garden and still coming to take Christ with their same ugly, unjust, mindless, cowardly, profane evil. They treat Him the same way still.

The attack of the crowd...then comes the kiss of the traitor. Can we look at that for a moment in verse 48? The kiss of the traitor..."Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He, hold Him fast." A signal seemed necessary. I mean, it was dark. And listen, Jesus had no halo. There was nothing about Him to distinguish Him outwardly from any other human being. There needed to be a sign so there would be no mistake. They did not want to get the wrong person. And they thought that maybe the disciples might try to thrust out the wrong one and they wanted no risk. So Judas came up with the sign. Unbelievable...what a perverted mind of all the things that he could have done, he chose a kiss in his perverted twisted deranged thinking.

Kissing was the mark of homage. Kissing was offered from a pupil to a beloved teacher as a sign of respect and love. It was, by the way, only to be offered to a teacher when the teacher offered it first. It was very brash to walk up to a teacher and offer a kiss unless it had been invited by his own first embrace. But a kiss was a sign of affection, of intimacy. Inferiors kissed the back of the hand. If above the level of a servant, they might be able to kiss the front of the hand, the palm in that day. Slaves would kiss the feet. And those who would come in to receive mercy from an angry monarch would also kiss the feet begging for pardon. Great reverence was expressed by kissing the hem of a garment. But an embrace and a kiss on the cheek was a sign of close affection, warm love, intimacy, unselfish love, esteem. So that the kiss of Judas then becomes the most despicable act of all acts. He could have kissed the hand, he could have kissed the garment, he chose to go the whole way and feign affection for Christ...not only to provide a sign, but thinking in his stupidity to deceive Christ and the disciples.

So he says, "Whomsoever I shall kiss," or actually I may kiss, phileso(?) from phileo, to show affection. This is feigned innocence. It is a weak attempt to conceal his real character and treachery. I mean, it's bad enough to betray a friend, it's inconceivably worse to have sold the Son of God, but the delusion of having thought that you could deceive Him about it is beyond description. And so, Judas goes on with this kiss. He fulfills a thought in Proverbs 27:6 which says, "The kisses of an enemy are profuse." In other words, it's part of an enemy's deceit to overdo it. The hatred of the priests would have been enough. The raucous screams of the crowds that were going to come in a few hours, the pitiful cowardice of Pilate, the brutality of the soldiers, all of that Jesus suffered with a quiet spirit. But I can't even imagine what must have gone on in His heart as He was standing there being kissed by Judas. Inconceivable that a man could return such treachery for divine love.

But in verse 49 we read, "And immediately he came to Jesus and said, Hello, teacher, and kissed Him." This is reminiscent in a small way, I guess, we could say a parallel is found in Ezekiel where Ezekiel says that there are those who pollute God among the people for handfuls of barley and bread. It reminds me of Amos who indicated that there are those who sell the righteous for money and the poor for a pair of shoes. And here Jesus is being sold by Judas and being betrayed with a kiss. And may I hasten to add, Judas is no less guilty because Jesus accomplished redemption, that does not mitigate his guilt at all. That only overrides his evil. It does not eliminate it.

So, in the most intimate sign of personal affection is the mark of betrayal. And Judas says in verse 48, "When I do that, seize Him, grab Him and don't let Him go." And that's his real issue here. Grab Him and hang on to Him. And so immediately as soon as Jesus came into the view of Judas, he said, "Hello, teacher," and the deceitful words are as ugly as they can be in his mouth. And he kissed him. And here it is not phileso but kataphileso. It is intensified. He intensely and fervently embraced and affectionately kissed Him. It is used, can you believe it, of a man kissing his own bride. It is used of the profuse kisses of the woman of the...who kissed the Savior's feet. And it is in the midst of all of

this, Luke 22:48 records that Jesus said to Judas, "Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" And Mark says in Mark 14:45 that Judas went ahead and said, "Teacher, teacher," and kept on kissing Him. Even the words of Christ, "Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" couldn't stop this deranged man.

This is the profanation of a holy act because in Psalm 2 it says, "Kiss the Son," do you remember that? Kiss the Son. This is a profaning of the holy kiss which the Son desires. He's acting like one who grieves. He...his run ahead of the crowd, perhaps Jesus won't think he's with the crowd, but maybe Jesus will think he's come to warn Him. Maybe the disciples will think he's come to warn Him. So he separated a little from the crowd by now and feigned sorrow and love. And Jesus endures it.

And in verse 50 we come to a conclusion for this morning, "Jesus said to him, Companion, or fellow, or comrade," and then this very interesting statement, you must listen carefully, "On what you are here." That's the literal Greek. It's difficult to translate. And you might find differing translations. Let me tell you what I believe the text is saying. It's not friend, it's not the word "friend." This is not the word philos. This is the word hetairos, it means fellow. He never called Judas a friend at this point. That word friend was reserved for another kind of person. He used it in John 15 when He said to His disciples, "I call you friends." Judas had left. This is not a friend. This is a companion. He is associated still with Christ. He is not a friend. Comrade, companion, fellow, these words, "On what you are here." The best translation is this, "Do what you are here to do...carry it out...everything is ready."

How could He say that? I'll tell you how, He just spent time in prayer, hadn't He? And everything was resolved in His heart, He was moving to the cross. He endured those kisses. He endured those kisses, kisses of the betrayer, and simply said, "Do what you are here to do." That statement was the farewell of Jesus to the son of perdition. That was it. And I daresay that Judas who is in hell at this moment must have ringing in his ears and will have for all eternity in that hell-bound brain, "Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss? Do what you are here to do." I believe he'll hear those last words of Christ to him forever.

Now I said to you that I see in this the wickedness of the world. May I say to you I see also here the wretchedness of a false disciple...the wretchedness of a false disciple? Judas is a false disciple. I can't imagine anything more wicked than that. He illustrates to us false discipleship. Now listen, what are the marks of a false disciple in this case? First is greed, he loved money, he lived for now, he wanted glory, he wanted success. He wanted the earth. He wanted the stuff. He had a greater regard for things than he did for God. He had a greater desire for self than He did for Christ. And it is typical of a false disciple that they get on board with Jesus to get what they want, and when Jesus doesn't deliver what they thought and puts demands on them that are different than what they thought, they're gone. And they may try to get all they can get in getting out. They're like the seed planted that sprung up a little while, but when the sun came on and there was a price to pay, they wither and die. They

follow Christ a little while, but eventually they'll sell Him out for selfish desire, for money, for prestige, for power. They love darkness. They love the world. They love what's in the world and they'll sell the Savior like Esau sold his birthright for a pot of stew. False disciples are marked by selfish greed.

Secondly, they're marked by deceit. They masquerade with subtle deception in an attempt to delude others. They pretend to love the Lord like he must have because none of the disciples suspected him. When Jesus said one of you is betraying Me, they said, "Is it I? Is it I? Is it I?" They're deceitful. So deceitful that our Lord said we can't really tell who's real and who is not. The wheat and the tare grows together.

Finally, the false disciple is hypocritical. He kisses to kill. He pays homage on the outside, he hates on the inside. O the hypocrisy of false discipleship.

And it hasn't changed. Judas is no solitary monster. There are Judases in every age. There are Judases in this church who have come here and feigned love for Christ and feigned adoration of Christ and they are deceitful and they are hypocritical and they are in it for what they receive, a certain amount of salved conscience, peace of mind, a certain reputation that they desire to gain, a certain sense of self-satisfaction or maybe because it's good for business, or I don't know. And they deceive and they are hypocrites and they are in it for themselves. And if the truth were known, they kiss to kill and they will sell Jesus Christ if they can see greater gain somewhere else.

And so, we face as we face this text the reality of the fact that each one of us will find ourselves in the garden there. We either stand with the wicked unjust mindless cowardly multitude, or we stand there with a false disciples. Or as we shall see next Lord's day, we'll find ourselves with the defeated disciples or hopefully with the triumphant Savior. Let's bow in prayer.

While your heads are bowed for just a moment, we are so privileged to have opened the Word of God and entered into the scene with the Lord Jesus. And I hope you sense that privilege. But this is a confronting message and we face the fact that it is not just history, it is reality. For the unjust and mindless and cowardly evil crowd is still with us, rejecting Christ. And false disciples are all around. And so we're confronted by this scene as to where we stand. Do we stand with the crowd? Do we kiss with Judas? Do we stand with the disciples or beside the triumphant Savior? The disciples ran, weak. Where do you stand? That's the ultimate question. If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, if you're not bowing at His blessed feet and worshiping Him, we call you to do that this day.

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