

## **“Betrayal: Where Opposition and Rejection Meet” Matthew 26:1-16, Sermon Notes**

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**Morning Worship Service**

“And it came about that when Jesus had finished all these words, He said to His disciples,<sup>2</sup> “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is *to be* delivered up for crucifixion.”<sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas;<sup>4</sup> and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth, and kill *Him*.<sup>5</sup> But they were saying, “Not during the festival, lest a riot occur among the people.”<sup>6</sup> Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper,<sup>7</sup> a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it upon His head as He reclined *at the table*.<sup>8</sup> But the disciples were indignant when they saw *this*, and said, “Why this waste?”<sup>9</sup> “For this *perfume* might have been sold for a high price and *the money* given to the poor.”<sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me.”<sup>11</sup> “For the poor you have with you always; but you do not always have Me.”<sup>12</sup> “For when she poured this perfume upon My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial.”<sup>13</sup> “Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be spoken of in memory of her.”<sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests,<sup>15</sup> and said, “What are you willing to give me to deliver Him up to you?” And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver.<sup>16</sup> And from then on he *began* looking for a good opportunity to betray Him.” (Matt. 26:1-16 NAS)

**Textual Purpose:** To recount the betrayal of Christ by Judas and the opposition of the religious leaders

**Sermonic Purpose:** To explain the betrayal of Christ and to exhort the professing Christian to guard their heart from the deceitfulness of sin

### **Introduction**

It is our joy to turn back to God’s Word and to continue our study in Matthew’s account of our Lord’s life

- I am excited by this account for I believe Matthew answers questions that I have had
- I love it when I have nagging questions and the author gives the answer
- Oct 14, 2018

Some have looked at this section of Scripture and think of love (See Kent Hughes)

- The love of Jesus who is about to lay down His life for the sins of the world
- The Love of Jesus who is in particular going to die for His disciples and those who believe
- The Love of a disciple who poured out perfume upon the head of Christ
- The Love of the Father to prepare the Son for burial
- Love has been seen as the focus of this section of Scripture

These themes are certainly directly, or in some cases indirectly, found in our text this morning. But this text is much more. This text is about betrayal which leads to murder because Jesus is innocent and He is going to die

- For betrayal to take place you will certainly find other practices as well
- In our text we find opposition from the religious authorities
- We also see rejection by a disciple and friend
- Opposition and Rejection were the soil which fed into the fruit of Judas betraying Christ

This passage is bookend by accounts of opposition and rejection

In this account Matthew explains the details behind the betrayal of Christ

### **Body**

Now that Jesus has finished His message, Matthew now turns his account back to the life and ministry of our Lord

Look at verse 1

“And it came about that when Jesus had finished all these words, He said to His disciples,” (Matt. 26:1 NAS)

- Christ turns the attention back to the matter at hand
- Before the glory to come there is the suffering now
- Before His judgment comes His sacrifice, which must first be made
- “And it came about when Jesus finished these words” This is after His message to the disciples on the mount of Olives. This is Wednesday of the Passion week

So Jesus says this to His disciples:

"You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is *to be* delivered up for crucifixion." (Matt. 26:2 NAS)

This is now the fourth and final time Jesus has said to His disciples that He was going to die. I'm sure most of you remember the accounts:

“From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.” (Matt. 16:21 NAS)

“And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men;<sup>23</sup> and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." And they were deeply grieved.” (Matt. 17:22-23 NAS)

“And as Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve *disciples* aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them,<sup>18</sup> "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death,<sup>19</sup> and will deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify *Him*, and on the third day He will be raised up." (Matt. 20:17-19 NAS)

Finally here in Matt 26:2:

"You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man **is to be delivered** up for crucifixion." (Matt. 26:2 NAS)

I have wondered from the first moment that Matthew recorded our Lord's Words here, why?

- Was Jesus preparing his disciples for His departure? Certainly, that is part of what Christ was accomplishing
- Was He demonstrating that He was in control of all the details? Certainly, the authority of Christ had been demonstrated time and time again
  - Authority over demons
  - Over disease
  - Over death
  - Authority in His teaching and authority in His leadership which was recognized by others
- Was He needing their comfort? This is an assumption since the scriptures say nothing about the disciples bringing Christ any comfort
- Was He wanting to comfort them? If so it did not really work as they were grieved when they heard it and still scattered when it happened

So why did Jesus share so many times that He was going to die?

I believe our text this morning gives us the answer

*With each time our Lord spoke the heart of Judas grew colder and more indifferent*

Now what is amazing to me is how all of this worked. What we see in this text is the anatomy of betrayal. In this text you see opposition and rejection which lead to betrayal

- The religious leaders who were opposed to Christ and seeking to harm him
- On the other hand, you have Judas' rejection of Christ which culminates in his false piety
- The result was agreement between the religious leaders and Judas to turn in Christ

Now I want to walk you through the anatomy of betrayal

So why did Jesus share so many times that He was going to die? Remember this, Jesus is simply sharing with His disciples the Father's plan

The betrayal began with Christ upholding the Father's will. Jesus just stated again here in Matt 26:2 *what was ultimately the plan of the father*. Jesus has come to lay down His life. For Jesus to tell His disciples what was going to happen was to reveal what the Father has determined from the foundation of the world

Jesus has always come to do the will of the Father:

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (Jn. 6:38 NAS)

- Christ came yielding His will to the Father
- When Satan offered Christ the opportunity to get what He wanted now but taking from the hand of Satan, Christ resisted and reminded Satan

Mark 9:9, 12

- Jesus was to come and suffer loss and die

Listen what Mark makes clear in Jesus words is that The OT is full of explanation of the Son of man having to suffer and die

Jesus was only sharing with His disciples what had already been taught in the OT and what was planned by the Father from eternity past

"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again." (Jn. 10:17 NAS)

To do the will of the Father was Jesus' ultimate desire

- Christ came to submit to the Father's plan even if in submitting to the father's plan it created opposition from one of His own
- This is exactly what happened
- The plan of God was foolishness to Judas. And each account from our Lord of the Father's plan only hardened Judas' heart

Jesus knew He came into this World to lay down His life

- This is why the Father sent Him into this World
- He came as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the World
- He came to die

The problem is that this plan did not fit well with Judas' plan

- Judas was not part of this group to fail
- He wanted to succeed
- He wanted power and prestige
- He wanted wealth

The more Jesus talked about His death the more Judas' heart was revealed. The more Jesus confronted Judas the more he did not believe and resisted the message

- Judas could have repented at any time
- He heard all of Jesus' messages
- He saw the works of Christ
- He could have applied many of the lessons to himself. Like the Parable of the unjust steward Luke 16:1-13
- He could have learned from the sermon on the mount to not love money Matt 6:19-34
- He could have learned to not be greedy (Lk 13:13-21)
- Jesus even said that one among them was a devil (John 6:70) – He could have looked at his own heart and seen that he was acting demonically
- *Jesus even warns later in this chapter by giving a woe to the one who would betray him (Matt 26:24)*

*Yet through all of this Judas kept up the deceit. He had already grown cold in his heart. His heart had already been hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. He was already giving himself over to the Devil to be influenced and directed by Him*

- This is what is scary about sin. It hardens the heart towards truth
- It makes a man right in His own eyes and he will not listen to wisdom
- It causes one to be blind to the devastating consequences of evil until it is too late
- It feeds greed, pride, and lust and hardens the heart to righteousness
- *So that even when it is called out directly the sinner cannot see it or will not see it in himself*

Now this final time Jesus exposes Judas

*Notice what Jesus says here that indicates that He knows He is going to be betrayed:*

"You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is *to be* delivered up for crucifixion." (Matt. 26:2 NAS)

- The word for delivered up here is the word for betrayal
- This word is often translated as "to hand one over"
- To betray or betrayal
- The word is from παραδίδομι
- It is used many times in the NT

Some examples are:

"Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee;" (Matt. 4:12 NAS)

"Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him." (Matt. 10:4 NAS)

"Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.<sup>10</sup> "And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another." (Matt. 24:9-10 NAS) (or betray one another)

- When you catch a bad guy and hand him over to the police that is a just thing to do
- When you turn an innocent man over to wicked authorities to kill Him that is betrayal

Here once again Jesus warns His disciples that He is going to be handed over or betrayed. The idea is that one of His own will turn him in. A trusted friend is going to turn him over to evil forces

- This is another warning to Judas
- It should have given him pause
- *It should had indicated to him that his Lord knows all things and all things are laid bare before Him*

But there is more that was going on during this time

We also see in this text the opposition against Christ

"Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas;<sup>4</sup> and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth, and kill *Him*.<sup>5</sup> But they were saying, "Not during the festival, lest a riot occur among the people." (Matt. 26:3-5 NAS)

There are some amazing details here

- First the religious authorities and the social influencers were present
- The elders were the leading men of the society
- These would be the Older businessmen
- Those who were successful and influential in the community
- There were also the spiritual authorities – Chief Priests

In particular they were at the High Priest's house

- The House of Caiaphas
- Caiaphas was able to be the high priest because he married the daughter of Annas who was the High Priest before Caiaphas took over
- This was a political marriage
- While Caiaphas was the high priest his father in law still held a lot of influence
- Caiaphas was the High Priest from AD 15-37
- He was one of the longest running High Priests
- The man who followed him lasted only 50 days
- He clearly was a man filled with political savvy to keep hold of that kind of position for so long
- These two men had controlled the religious life of Israel for many years
- They were the ones who set up the selling of animals at a premium for the sacrifice
- They were the ones in charge making sure each animal was fit for the offering
- They also setup the money changing system to convert Pagan money to Jewish money at a fee of course so that God was given pure money

They had all the control and now they were seeking to convince the rest of the spiritual leaders to help them keep the control

*Matthew adds their intention in vs 4. They did not want to arrest Jesus and try him during the festival. They wanted to wait until it was over*

*"<sup>4</sup> and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth, and kill Him. <sup>5</sup> But they were saying, "Not during the festival, lest a riot occur among the people." Matt 26:4-5*

- They wanted to arrest him in stealth
- They did not want the people to be the wiser of it
- They were looking for an opportunity and the goal was to kill Him

*Now John gives a few more details on this event:*

John 11:47:

*"Therefore, the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. <sup>48</sup> "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."*

Here John reveals their motive. It was not because they feared the people would look down on them. Or think ill of them. They feared the people would respond by getting angry and starting a riot

- Then Rome would come in and take control
- And then they would lose their places as they would have been seen as instigating the riot and destroying the peace

“But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all,<sup>50</sup> nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish.”<sup>51</sup> Now this he did not say on his own initiative; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation,<sup>52</sup> and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.<sup>53</sup> So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.” (Jn. 11:47-53 NAS)

The religious leaders wanted Jesus dead but they wanted him dead on their terms. They did not want to risk their positions of authority

- Yet once again we are going to see that God is in control of all the details
- God is accomplishing His perfect will without violating their will
- The Lamb of God was to be offered up as a Sacrifice for sin
- This was the time that Jesus was to be given over
- And God did not need to do anything but present Christ before these Godless men who gave themselves over to their blood lust to murder Jesus

So this is the opposition during the time of Christ. The spiritual leaders were opposed to Christ

- They were opposed to His message
- They were opposed to His leadership
- They did not want relinquish anything they had to this prophet
- It is also likely that they had seen prophets come and go before. This one was no different. They had already determined that Jesus was a fraud. Now they needed to dispose of Him

Their opposition was revealed in Matt 22-23 when they questioned Jesus and His authority

- They did everything they could to discredit Him
- They tried to make him look bad
- They tried to make him take a stand against Moses
- They tried to make him look foolish by answering an unanswerable dilemma

They were obviously opposed to Christ and Matthew reminds us of this opposition

The next event that Matthew records is the rejection of Christ by Judas

“Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper,<sup>7</sup> a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it upon His head as He reclined *at the table*.<sup>8</sup> But the disciples were indignant when they saw *this*, and said, “Why this waste?”<sup>9</sup> “For this *perfume* might have been sold for a high price and *the money* given to the poor.”<sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me.”<sup>11</sup> “For the poor you have with you always; but you do not always have Me.”<sup>12</sup> “For when she poured this perfume upon My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial.”<sup>13</sup> “Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is

preached in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be spoken of in memory of her." (Matt. 26:6-13 NAS)

At this point in the narrative Matthew jumps back in time

- He goes back to Saturday when Jesus was in Bethany
- Before he explains what comes next Matthew gives context by going back to the events that played out the weekend before
- The current time line is Wednesday. The day before the disciples would celebrate the Passover

You see on Saturday when Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem He and His disciples stopped in Bethany. They went to the house of Simon the Leper

- It is most likely the former Leper as Jesus would not want either He or his disciples to be unclean for the Passover
- Simon was throwing a lavish dinner for Jesus and the disciples
- This dinner was also helped out by Mary, Martha, and Lazarus
- The now risen Lazarus was there to help in the preparations

*We learn of this in John's account:*

"Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.<sup>2</sup> So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining *at the table* with Him.<sup>3</sup> Mary therefore took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." (Jn. 12:1-3 NAS)

- We learn from this account the timing of the dinner was on Saturday. Six Days before the Passover
- We learn who took the perfume and spread it on Jesus – it was Mary
- Likely an act with many implications. Jesus had raised her brother Lazarus from the dead. So there very well may have been gratitude
- But more specifically our Lord says she did this to prepare Him for His burial
- She very well may have heard Jesus make the comments or heard from one of the disciples what He said about His death

It could have been that one of the disciples told Mary

- In either case she believed He was telling the truth and she prepared in faith
- She worshipped the Lord with great sacrifice
- She and poured out all she had

Matthew describes Mary as taking an alabaster jar

A woman came to Him with an *alabaster vial* of very costly perfume, and she poured it upon His head as He reclined *at the table*

- The idea is a jar with a long fluted neck
- The long neck of the jar would cause the contents to pour out very slowly
- Since the perfume was so valuable it would be desirable to use it sparingly
- But not in this case. Mary poured it out on Jesus
- John adds that Mary poured it on his feet
- All of Jesus was covered in this costly perfume

*Mark adds that the vile of perfume was broken and spread over the head of Jesus*

*Mark 14:3*

“And while He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining *at the table*, there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; *and* she broke the vial and poured it over His head”

*So this whole vile of perfume of pure nard was spread all over Christ*

- *This is an act of worship and honor*
- *This is an act of faith*
- *It demonstrates great love and devotion*

The result is recorded by Matthew:

“But the disciples were indignant when they saw *this*, and said, “Why this waste?”<sup>9</sup> “For this *perfume* might have been sold for a high price and *the money* given to the poor.”<sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me.”<sup>11</sup> “For the poor you have with you always; but you do not always have Me.”<sup>12</sup> “For when she poured this perfume upon My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial.”<sup>13</sup> “Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be spoken of in memory of her.” (Matt. 26:8-13 NAS)

Instead of being caught up in the act of worship with Mary the disciples were “indignant”

- Matthew does not single out Judas here
- Matthew points to all the disciples being indignant
- John makes it known that it was Judas who starts the conflict

*John 12:4-ff*

“But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said,<sup>5</sup> “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii, and given to poor *people*?”<sup>6</sup> Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.<sup>7</sup> Jesus therefore said, “Let her alone, in order that she may keep it for the day of My burial.” (Jn. 12:1-7 NAS)

- Judas was indignant because he wanted the money
- The other disciples were caught up in the hypocrisy of Judas
- They only saw the waste

At this point they did not see the outpouring of the perfume as preparation for burial. They thought this was simply a custom and that she was going overboard

- After all people did not smell very nice after a long walk
- A little perfume would make all the dinner guests a little more tolerable
- So from the outset to pour all the perfume on Jesus would be extravagant and a waste
- So Matthew points out that all the disciples join with Judas
  - The difference though is that Judas was indignant because of greed
  - While the other disciples were indignant because they were confused about the purpose

*Until Jesus clarifies this woman's act of love all of the disciples were caught up in opposing her. But Jesus reveals she is preparing Jesus for his death*

- This was a loving act from the father given to the son through the faith of Mary
- This was in preparation for the sacrifice that He was about to lay down, His own life
- This was an act of worship not waste
- This was a godly response of faith and worthy to be proclaimed wherever the gospel is preached

And sure enough in Matthew, Mark, and John this account of worship is recorded and the testimony of this woman's faith is recorded and remembered

Now one more note here:

- This perfume was expensive
- It was worth 300 denarii
- A year's wages minus holidays and weekends
- It was an incredible act of sacrifice
- This was very sacrificial on the part of the woman

Also note that Matthew did not record the woman's name. I gathered that from John. I think the reason was to focus on Judas and his betrayal

- It was the faith filled response of a true devotee to Christ that prompted the unbelieving response in Judas
- *Her faith revealed his faithlessness*
- *Her sacrifice revealed his greed*
- *Her devotion exposed his callousness*
- *Her service lead to praise while his actions will lead to condemnation*

It is amazing to me how easy it was for the other disciples to get caught up in the leaven in Judas' heart. They did not see the real issue that was going on. Until Christ brought perspective, they could only see the waste

- Godly perspective is what gives clarity in a moment
- The event appeared on the outside to be an out of control custom was in reality an affirmation of love and preparation

The Betrayal initiated:

The problem was the perspective only hardened Judas heart. Notice the final verses in this section:

“Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests,<sup>15</sup> and said, “What are you willing to give me to deliver Him up to you?” And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver.<sup>16</sup> And from then on he *began* looking for a good opportunity to betray Him.” (Matt. 26:14-16 NAS)

Now these verses make sense

- Jesus has been telling His disciples that He was to be handed over or betrayed
- He was not going to be captured somewhere
- He was not going to be ambushed somewhere
- He was not going to be trapped somewhere
- He was not going to be kidnapped somewhere
- He was not going to be arrested in the streets
- He was going to be turned over to the authorities
- He was going to be betrayed

The religious leaders were opposed to Christ and wanted Him arrested and killed

Judas was offended by what appeared to be wasteful spending on Christ. He was filled with greed because he wanted to be in control of that money

- The perfume could have been sold for 300 denarii
- Instead, bitter at the wasteful use, Judas sells Jesus for 30 pieces of silver
- That is the price of a slave as recorded in Exodus 21:32
- It amounted to about 120 Denarii – Less than half of what the perfume would have sold for
  - No doubt this was on Judas mind as he walked away from those religious leaders after making this agreement
  - *He may have even been made more bitter that Jesus' life was worth less than the perfume spent on Him*

For Judas these events were enough to push him to the breaking point

- God's plan for Jesus was not lining up with Judas' plan.
- Judas wanted success. Judas wanted glory. Judas wanted honor. Judas wanted fame and riches.
- When those things were taken away Judas was looking for one last payday before he went his own way
  - The fact that Matthew, Mark, and John point to this event indicates that Judas was driven by greed
  - And he hid his greed behind giving
  - “This money could have been given to the poor.”
  - The heart which practices evil often hides behind religious activities
  - I can't be bad because I am doing a good thing here. It cannot be greed because I want to give to the poor
  - But the actions show otherwise. The stated intentions are good and honorable. The execution is lacking

- Judas would not give to the poor. Instead he collected the money and took from the collection. John tells us that Judas used to pilfer from the moneybox
- *He was filled with greed and was sophisticated in his hiding his true agenda*
- But now he has the opportunity to act
- *And even in this last payday Jesus is disappointing him. His life was worth less than what he could have had*

Well Judas' betrayal was cemented

- He had motive, greed and lust for honor
- He had motivation to fulfill his desires, 30 pieces of silver
- Now all he needed was opportunity
- With this opportunity he would turn on his friend
- He would sell out not only Christ and the disciples but all of the experiences they had together
- He would sell out his own soul
- He would sell out his own reputation

For what? A measly 30 pieces of silver

- This is the destructive nature of sin
- It promises great things and delivers little
- Its reward is always a temporary fraction of the great eternal things God gives
- Sin will cost you everything
- Here is the thing about God's economy. Sin will never be rewarded. It may have temporary excitement, but it leads to destruction
  - This is what makes the godless rage
  - They want the rewards and honor that comes with righteousness but while keeping their sin
  - They want the rewards of righteousness without the work and practice of righteousness

Judas wanted the money and the honor of being a part of God's work but not the suffering and the difficulties that come with God's plan

- *He turned on Jesus and gave him over because he could not see how Christ could die and be victorious or even profitable*

## Conclusion

Friends do not treat sin lightly. It is pervasive in the fallen man. It runs throughout

- It is powerful and grips the heart
  - Judas will soon realize the error of his way
  - He will soon come to see the treachery in his actions
  - He will soon come to see the empty riches he gained and he will not want them
  - He will seek relief and only find it in his death. Even then he will find that he will not find relief
- Sin is deceptive
  - It hides its agenda – like Judas pretending to love the poor
  - It offers something valuable and only leads to destruction

Here we see that God is patient and long suffering. Judas is given multiple opportunities to do the right thing and he only hardens his heart

- Do not leave room in your heart for sin to find a place
- Kill it quickly
- It will only make you cold and callous towards the truth and righteousness
- It will destroy your spiritual sensitivity and may, like Judas, lead you to do the unthinkable until you finally see it
- But you can know it is there. When you believe God's Word you will see what is in your heart

Let us pray that we are protected from an evil and unbelieving heart