

Day 158, Luke 22

by David Servant

Jesus' sacrifice for our sins is a reminder of the importance of prioritizing our relationship with Him over material gain and worldly desires.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 27:7, Luke 22:32, Luke 22:44, John 6:51, John 12:6, 1 Corinthians 11:20

Topics: "Serving God", "Amazing Grace"

Description

David Servant preaches on the dangers of serving money over God, using Judas' betrayal of Jesus as a prime example. He emphasizes how even witnessing miracles and serving in ministry does not immunize one from the lure of greed. The sermon also delves into the significance of the Lord's Supper as a full meal symbolizing Jesus' sacrifice and presence within believers. Additionally, the narrative of Peter's denial of Jesus and subsequent restoration is explored, highlighting the theme of amazing grace amidst human failure. The sermon concludes with a reflection on Jesus' intense suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and the necessity of His sacrificial death for the salvation of humanity.

Transcript

If there ever was an example of someone serving mammon over God, Judas' betrayal of Jesus is it. Note that Judas took the initiative to secretly visit the chief priests, and "they agreed to give him money" (22:5). He offered them his services for pay, and they ultimately agreed on 30 pieces of silver. That may not sound like very much money, but it was enough to buy a field (Matt. 27:7). Incidentally, if Jesus and His apostles were so wealthy, as is so often claimed by modern prosperity preachers, one would have to wonder why Judas would betray the One who was helping him to get rich in hopes of gaining enough money to buy a field.

Beware of the love of money! Even one who literally lives with Jesus for three years, who witnesses miracles, and who serves in supernatural ministry, is not beyond its lure. Judas had already seared his conscience by pilfering funds from the ministry money box, effectively stealing from Jesus, His disciples, and the poor (Jn. 12:6). Selling Christ Himself was the final step in his downward fall. The one who opens the door to greed opens the door to Satan, just as Judas did. When we disobey Christ to give money primacy, we betray Christ as Judas did, only to a lesser degree. Choose serving Christ or serving money! Both cannot be master!

The church's first Lord's Supper was Jesus' last Passover meal, and so we see that both were full meals. That is how the Lord's Supper was practiced by the early church, which is why it is referred to as the

Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20) rather than the Lord's Snack, which is what it has become in modern Christendom. Jesus made it clear that He Himself was the fulfillment of what had been annually practiced by millions of Israelites for centuries. As we chew the bread of the Lord's Supper, it should remind us that Jesus was "crushed for our iniquities" (Is. 53:5), and as we swallow that bread we should remember that the Living Bread had come down from heaven to live inside us (Jn. 6:51)!

Today we read something that is not found in Matthew or Mark's Gospels. Jesus told Peter that Satan had demanded (or, "obtained by asking") permission to sift him like wheat. This reminds us of the story of Job. Satan "obtained by asking" permission to bring trouble into Job's life.

What was Peter's sifting? From the context, it seems it was his experience of denying the Lord three times after publicly declaring his loyalty. Imagine how Peter felt when the cock crowed a third time and his eyes met Jesus' eyes. The Lord had no need to lip the words, "I told you so." The tough fisherman from Galilee wept bitter tears over his failure, and it no doubt continued to trouble him deeply even after the Lord's resurrection. But as He foretold Peter of his betrayal, Jesus also foretold him of his restoration. Peter would "turn again" and be able to "strengthen his brothers" (22:32). Amazing grace!

Luke is the only Gospel-writer who mentions that Jesus' "sweat became like drops of blood, falling upon the ground" (22:44) in the Garden of Gethsemane. Luke was likely describing a rare condition known as hematidrosis, when, under extreme emotional stress, tiny blood vessels rupture in a person's sweat glands, producing a mixture of blood and sweat. Jesus was not only anticipating being scourged and crucified, but bearing God's wrath for the sins of the world. No wonder He prayed to escape what He was about to suffer if it were possible. There was no other way, however, to save you and me.

I almost wish that the high priest's slave wouldn't have ducked when he saw Peter's sword swinging in his direction. Had he not, Peter may have cut off his head (as he apparently intended), and Jesus would have performed a greater miracle than just healing a severed ear! What a testimony that man would have had: "I was decapitated by a preacher, but Jesus put my head back on!"

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