

Active Betrayal

by Dick Brogden

We all actively betray Jesus, but He extends mercy and forgiveness to us through communion, offering us repeated opportunities to repent and be forgiven.

Scripture: Matthew 26:33

Topics: "Betrayal And Forgiveness", "Repentance And Grace"

Description

Dick Brogden emphasizes the universal act of betrayal towards Jesus, drawing parallels between Judas and Peter's denials, cautioning against false confidence in our faith. He highlights Jesus' gracious extension of love and mercy even to those who betray Him, using the example of reaching into a common bowl as a symbol of offering grace. Communion serves as a reminder of our continuous betrayal of Jesus and the ongoing need for His forgiveness and grace, urging believers to repent and seek forgiveness from both God and others. Brogden stresses the importance of acknowledging the impact of our sins on others and the need to maintain right relationships with fellow believers, emphasizing the cycle of forgiveness and grace mirrored in the act of communion.

Transcript

We all betray Jesus-all the time. Matthew 26:25 puts the action of Judas in the present active sense: "Then Judas, who was betraying Him." If something within you resists the claim that we all actively betray Jesus, you have something of Peter lurking. "Lord even if all are made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble" (v. 33). You poor fool. You will end up publicly (by your actions if not your words) swearing that you "do not know the Man" (v. 72). The super-spiritual among us (beware the dramatic professions of allegiance in yourself and others) are the ones who give Jesus away by kissing Him. Better to be silent and sober when we realize "all forsook Him and fled" (v. 56).

In Africa and the Middle East food is often served from a common platter or bowl. A way to honor another is to reach into the bowl, choose a choice piece of meat or vegetable and hand it to a friend. In Ethiopia, they will even place that morsel directly in your mouth. Some scholars say that this is what Jesus did: He reached into that bowl, selected a choice piece of food, looked Judas in the eye, and extended one more opportunity to him: "Judas, I love you. I love you to the end. I know who you are and what you are about to do. Judas, one more chance." And Jesus extended grace.

When we take communion "in remembrance" of Him, with Peter we "remember the words of Jesus" and weep (v. 75). Communion should remind us that we are active betrayers of Jesus. Communion forces us

to admit that not only were we sinners saved by grace, we continue to sin (betray Jesus) and continue to be saved by grace. Despite all our covenants and promises and efforts and resolutions, we ALL actively betray Jesus. That is not the wonder. The wonder is that in the Lord's Supper Jesus reaches into the bread of His torn body, stretches across time and sin, extends mercy, looks us in the eyes and says: "This is my body. Take, eat!" We are Judas. Jesus loves us still, and offers us again a chance to turn from our betrayal and to be forgiven.

When Judas betrayed Jesus he also broke brotherhood and betrayed his friends. Our sin always affects others and usually is against others. This is why we are instructed not to take communion when our hearts are not right with our friends. Communion allows us repeated opportunities to repent and to be forgiven-by our brothers and sisters. Communion is also a prime time to forgive, to be like Philemon and release a past wrong. To admit it is incumbent on us (as active betrayers forgiven again and again by Jesus) to forgive again and again those that have betrayed us.

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