

Betrayal and Denial in the Courtyard Luke 22v47-62

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Date: 18 March 2018

Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0 : 00] 1-0-5-8 in the Church Bible, starting in verse 47.

While he was still speaking, a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him.

But Jesus asked him, Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss? When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, Lord, should we strike with our swords?

And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. But Jesus answered, no, more of this, no more of this. And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders who had come for him, Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me.

[1 : 03] But this is your hour, when darkness reigns. Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance, and when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them.

A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, this man was with him. But he denied it. Woman, I don't know him, he said.

A little later, someone else saw him and said, you also are one of them. Man, I am not, Peter replied. About an hour later, another asserted, certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.

Peter replied, man, I don't know what you're talking about. Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord had spoken to him.

Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times. And he went outside and wept bitterly. Let's pray.

[2 : 27] Father, thank you for this account of the Lord Jesus and his followers.

Written to tell us the true events of the life of Jesus. Father, we pray that we, as we listen together, would be able to enter into this account.

That you would show us where we fit in this story. And ultimately, that you would show us how we desperately need the Lord Jesus.

So speak afresh to us today. We ask in your name. Amen. Well, how do you feel when people hurt you?

When a friend turns their back on you? Or someone breaks a promise they've made to you? How do you feel when that happens? Isolated and alone?

[4 : 05] Broken and crushed? What do you think should happen to someone who hurts you? Well, Jesus had a close circle of friends, the disciples.

Carefully chosen by Jesus. They'd lived and worked together for the last three years. They'd been through some amazing experiences together. We could say they trusted one another.

But those who claimed to be his closest friends all deserted Jesus. In fact, one betrayed Jesus and another denied Jesus.

Three things we're going to look at this morning. Darkness falls. Disciples fail. And grace flows.

First of all, darkness falls. It is night. It's dark. Jesus is with his disciples in the olive grove.

[5 : 15] He's been there praying. But it's not just the darkness of the night. There is the darkness of Satan's work. In just a few hours, Jesus will be put to death, brutally executed.

But first, his arrest. Look at verse 52. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders who had come for him, that is, had come to arrest him, Am I leading a rebellion that you come with swords and clubs?

Look, every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour when darkness reigns.

Yes, the religious authorities have been plotting and planning to get rid of Jesus. But behind their schemes is this sinister work of Satan. As it says at the end of verse 53, This is your hour when darkness reigns.

Of course, Satan has been present all along through the account of Luke's gospel. Way back in Luke chapter 3, we read of Satan's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.

[6 : 36] This is how Luke records it. When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

And it seems that now that time has come. The hour of darkness reigns. All the forces of evil are coming together under the direction of Satan.

Have a look back at chapter 22, verse 3. There we read, chapter 22, verse 3, Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the twelve.

Verse 31. Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.

This is what Satan does. His aim is to destroy the work of Jesus and his followers. But what Satan sets out to achieve, let us remember, it is ultimately under the control and the plan of God.

[7 : 55] God allows. It's like he gives permission for these evil forces to kill Jesus. That's why Jesus says to them, This is your hour.

This is your allotted time when darkness reigns. Oh, you had that opportunity to arrest me, but it wasn't my time.

But now you can. For now this is the hour, the time when darkness reigns. But little do they know that the death of Jesus is the means by which he will destroy and defeat the work of Satan and provide salvation for all who will trust him.

So as Jesus heads to the cross, the darkness falls. Second, the disciples fail.

As the evil forces scheme, those closest to Jesus fail. First, betrayed by a kiss. It couldn't have come at a worse time.

[9 : 08] Remember, Jesus has just faced the reality of going to the cross. He will have to drink the cup. He's going to face God's judgment. He will experience hell.

Jesus is in physical and emotional breakdown. Back in verse 44, we're told that his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

So, if you need support, now is the time. You need your friends at this moment to gather around you, to support you, to pray for you, to be there.

But that's not what happens. Verse 47, while he was still speaking, a crowd came up and the man who was called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them.

Judas is one of the disciples. What's he up to? Why is he with this crowd? Why wasn't he with the other disciples?

[10 : 16] Well, look back to the beginning of chapter 22, verse 1. Chapter 22, verse 1.

Now, the festival of unleavened bread, called the Passover. Remember, the Passover was the time, the annual celebration of that great rescue from Egypt.

The rescue from slavery. That's what they're celebrating. So, the festival was approaching. Verse 2, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered Judas. That is, he came and tempted him. Called Iscariot, one of the twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.

And they were delighted and agreed to give Judas money. Judas consented and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

[11 : 30] There is nothing worse than the betrayal of a friend that you love. And then the betrayal happened.

Look at verse 47. The end of verse 47. Judas approached Jesus to kiss him.

But Jesus asked him, Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss? A kiss is for a friend, someone you love.

The only other time a kiss is mentioned in Luke, I wonder if you can remember it, is when the sinful woman came into that crowd, into Simon's house and, well, she kept kissing Jesus' feet.

It was an expression of deep love and devotion. But the kiss of Judas, well, it was like a stab in the back.

[12 : 40] Judas betrayed Jesus. How do you feel about Judas? What do you think should happen to him?

Well, the most disturbing thing in all of this is, I am Judas. And you are Judas. Because we all betray Jesus.

Jesus. Look again what Judas did back in chapter 22, verse 4. Judas went to the chief priests and the officers and the temple guard and discussed with them.

They planned and talked it through together how he might betray Jesus. And they were delighted and agreed to give him money.

Jesus had called Judas to be a disciple. They'd been together for three years as close friends. Jesus was going to die for Judas.

[13 : 47] But for Judas, Jesus wasn't enough. He wanted something more. He exchanged Jesus for something else. In this case, he got money.

And that's what betrayal is. It's turning your back on someone else to gain something else. And that's what I do.

And that's what we do. We turn our back on Jesus to get the things that we want. Because Jesus doesn't give what I demand and what I want when I want, well, I betray him.

I turn my back on him. We exchange him for other things and other people. So there is the betrayal by a kiss.

Second, there's denial by lies. You see, Judas wasn't the only one to turn his back on Jesus. In fact, Jesus said that Peter would deny him.

[14 : 56] Peter is horrified at the very thought of it. Go back to chapter 22, verse 33. So Jesus has just said to Peter that he's going to deny him.

Verse 33. But Peter replied, Lord, I'm ready to go with you to prison and to death. Jesus answered, I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.

What must Peter have thought? Jesus must be mad. There's no way I would turn my back on Jesus.

Well, yeah, others might, but not me. Well, in a few hours, Peter had the chance to prove himself. Verse 54.

Then seizing Jesus, they led him away and took him into a house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.

[16 : 06] And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. Just even in that little phrase, sitting down with them, he's become a part of that little crowd.

A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, this man was with him. But Peter denied it.

Woman, I don't know him, he said. A little later, someone else saw him and said, yes, yes, you, you also were one of them.

You're one of those disciples. Man, I am not, Peter replied. About an hour later, another asserted, yes, certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.

I recognize the accent. Yes, you're one of those people. Peter replied, man, I don't know what you're talking about. We could perhaps understand one denial and then kind of remove yourself.

[17 : 33] We might have a little sympathy for two denials, but three? Peter had at least an hour to think of what he might say, but when the pressure came on, Peter crumbled in a heap.

Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed. A few hours earlier, he was claiming to be the strongest, the greatest disciple.

Lord, I'm ready to go with you to prison and to death, but when it really mattered, when it really counted, Peter couldn't even bring himself to say that he just knew Jesus.

He couldn't say it. Well, I'm sure we could all do a lot better than Peter, couldn't we? Well, the sad reality is, I am just like Peter.

Peter. You are just like Peter. We all deny Jesus. Peter, I mean, Peter's not stupid. He knew what was happening.

[18 : 51] Jesus had been saying all along that he would be arrested, that he would die, and now he realizes that Jesus is going to die. And Peter knows that if he's associated with Jesus, well, he might die too.

And in the cold and dark reality of the courtyard, Peter decides that saving his life is more important than loving Jesus. And we're no different.

When the pressure comes on, our life becomes more important than loving Jesus. If letting people know that, well, yes, I'm a Christian, means that life is going to be tough, then I choose comfort.

If standing up for what I believe means I might lose one of my friends or I might fall out of favour with my boss, well, I'm going to choose my friends every time.

We deny him. Our lives are more important than loving Jesus. you see, as followers of Jesus, in the darkness of temptation, we all fail.

[20 : 19] The darkness falls, the disciples fail, but wonderfully grace flows. Jesus offers grace.

Look at how Jesus responds to all that is going on. Think of the darkness that is weighing in upon him. Think of the failure of those closest to him, and look at how Jesus responds.

Look at verse 48. Judas approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

Are you sure? Are you sure you want to go through with this, Judas? Don't you realise who I am? I am the Son of Man, the one with absolute power and supreme authority.

I have power to judge you. but I have authority to forgive you. There is a way back from this, Judas.

[21 : 30] Listen to my word of grace. The same opportunity is given to Peter. Look over at verse 61.

Try and picture yourself in that moment. The denials have just happened. you've heard the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter.

Across the courtyard, amidst all the noise, through the flicker of the flames, their eyes connect. It seems what must be like an eternity.

Jesus and Peter just locked looking at each other. Jesus looks and Peter remembers.

Rest of verse 61. Then Peter remembered the words the Lord had spoken to him. Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times.

[22 : 36] Jesus knows Peter has failed. Peter knows that he has failed. But Jesus looks not just to condemn him, but to forgive him.

Yes, Jesus shows him his guilt. The guilt is exposed as he looks. But Jesus longs for Peter's restoration. no words are spoken, but in that look, Peter, Peter, will you receive my grace?

You see, as darkness falls, as the disciples fail, grace flows from Jesus. And it's no different for you and I. In the darkest moment of our lives, in the midst of our greatest failure, Jesus speaks his word of grace to us.

There is a way back. You can be forgiven. Receive my grace. Well, how can we experience this grace for ourselves?

Well, there's a wrong way and there's a right way. First, the wrong way, remorse, like Judas. I guess we can be like Judas and respond with remorse.

[24 : 10] Luke's gospel doesn't actually tell us how Judas responded, but when you read on in Luke's continued account into the book of Acts, if you go to Acts chapter 1, we see what Luke has to say about Judas.

it's not a pretty picture. Just go forward. Luke, John, and then Acts chapter 1 verse 17.

So this is after Jesus has died, after the resurrection. The disciples are together and they're thinking about, well, who is going to replace Judas?

Well, what's happened to Judas? Well, we read about it in verse 8-17. They say, he was one of our number and shared in our ministry.

With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas brought a field, there he fell headlong, meaning that he had hung himself.

[25 : 21] His body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their own language akaldama, that is field of blood.

Go back to Luke. Judas was remorseful. Being remorseful means we regret what we have done because of the consequences it has on our life.

Judas feels bad, he's full of self pity, he regrets what he's done because of what people are now going to think of him. He feels so bad that he can't bear to think of what he will be known for the rest of his life that people are going to think of him as a betrayer.

He can't handle that. So he kills himself. You see remorse will not get you anywhere. Remorse doesn't lead you to grace.

Feeling bad about your life and feeling bad about your failures will only ruin you and destroy you. But we can be like Peter who responded with repentance.

[26 : 43] Let's read chapter 22 verse 61 together. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter and Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him.

Before the cock crows today you will disown me three times. And Peter went outside and wept bitterly.

Peter was repentant. Literally he threw himself on the ground and cried. He sees his sin. He sees his failure but more than that he admits to it.

These are tears not of self pity but tears for Jesus. He needs forgiveness. And that's the difference between remorse and repentance.

Remorse is to feel regret because you are found out and it leaves you broken and you can't live with yourself.

[27 : 47] Repentance is to own up to what you have done. It leaves you forgiven. as we respond to God's wonderful offer of grace as we repent we experience God's overflowing grace in our lives.

You see in Jesus we find the greatest friend possible. the one who will never betray you the one who will never deny you the one who never turns his back on you who is faithful and loyal so loyal that he has died for you.

For when Jesus died on the cross he was treated as that betrayer as that denier for you and for me. In love he walked to the field of blood he went to the cross and as the true and faithful friend he was willing to take our place to suffer my sin.

Jesus absorbs the judgment of God for us so that from the cross flows amazing grace. And when we experience that grace of forgiveness in our life it changes us radically.

Let me show you very quickly how it changes our lives. Look at verse 50 as Jesus is being arrested one of his disciples comes to Jesus' defense.

[29 : 29] Verse 50 and one of them struck the servant of the high priest cutting off his right ear. Wow. They've come to arrest Jesus destroy him and kill him but Jesus is innocent.

the servant is the guilty one. If justice is to be done then the servant should have more than his ear cut off. Verse 51 but Jesus answered no more of this and he touched the man's ear and healed him.

This is an enemy of Jesus. One who was going to get rid of Jesus and how does Jesus respond no more and he heals him.

You see when we experience God's grace in our life we don't need to take revenge. We don't need to plan up and conjure up ideas of getting back at people.

Instead of angry words we can now speak words of healing. Instead of cutting people off and not talking to them we can now welcome them back.

[30 : 45] Because I have been forgiven of my failure because Jesus has forgiven me the denier and the betrayer well I can now forgive those who fail me.

When we own our sin when we run to Jesus we experience God's overflowing grace. in Jesus we find the perfect friend the friend who loves you the friend who forgives you the friend who died for you.

Let's pray together. people I I I