

# The Question You Have To Answer

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Date: 26 February 2023

[ 0 : 00 ] Let us worship God, singing to his praise in Psalm 1a. That's in Sing Psalm, Psalm 1a. It's on the first page.

Blessed is the one who turns away from where the wicked walk, who does not stand in sinners' paths or sit with those who mock. Instead, he finds God's holy law, his joy and great delight. He makes the precepts of the Lord his study day and night. He prospers ever like a tree that's planted by a stream, and in due season yields its fruit, its leaves are always green.

Not so the wicked. They are like the chaff that's blown away. They will not stand when judgment comes or with a righteous day. It is the Lord who sees and knows the way the righteous go, but those who live an evil life the Lord will overthrow.

Psalm 1a, the whole psalm, blessed is the one who turns away. Blessed is the one who turns away from where the wicked walk, who does not stand in sinners' paths or sit with those who mock.

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[ 3 : 12 ] It is the Lord who sees and knows the way the righteous go, that those who live an evil life the Lord will overthrow.

Let us bow in prayer. Lord, as we gather before you this morning, we give thanks for another opportunity to praise you.

We give thanks that you are God of heaven and earth and that you have given us this wonderful day, a day that's set aside in order to not only to recognize your goodness and mercy towards us, but for us to worship you.

And we give thanks for us being able to come here on this lovely morning and for we're able to give praise and thanks to the God of heaven and earth. We pray that you'll bless us all, each and every one of us, as we wait upon you.

Help us to hear what God the Lord will speak, because we're told that he speaks peace to his people. And we pray that we might have that peace deep within our heart, that we may come to a greater knowledge of you and an understanding of who you are.

[ 4 : 41 ] And so we pray that you'll bless us from the youngest to the oldest. Pray your blessing on the creche and the tweenies and Sunday school that are just meeting just now.

And we ask that you'll bless each one. We pray for help and for health and strength. We pray particularly for those who are maybe unwell at this time. And we do again bring before you little Lucy Beth, and we pray your blessing upon her.

We give thanks for hearing of progress being made, but we know that she's still really needing attention and down in hospital. And ask that you'll bless her and be with Laura Jane.

And with Nuck, we ask that you'll bless them and all the respective members of the family. And ask, Lord, that you'll be able to bring her home soon and look after her. We pray for all who are anxious over loved ones and who are so aware of how fragile life is.

And we pray for those whose hearts are crushed and broken, particularly when there is so much sorrow and sadness with young. Watch over us then, we pray, and do us good.

[ 5 : 49 ] Help us to wait upon you and take away from us our sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Amen. Just a wee word to the young folk before they go through.

Yesterday, just before lunch, I went up to the shop just up the road from us to get some rolls. And Joshua, who can't come here today, became sick this morning, but he came with me.

He said, I want to come up with you. So that was fine. And it was, you know, in the winter, sometimes the sun seems to be lower than in the summer. In the summer, the sun's way, way, way up high in the sky.

But sometimes it's a bit lower and can be very bright. And sometimes it shines off the road and it's a bit, it's dazzling. Well, it was like that when we were going up the road.

And he said to me, Papa, I can't see properly in the sun. You know what? Well, you take my hand and be my eyes. So I said, okay. So he closed his eyes and I took his hand and we started walking.

[ 6 : 55 ] I said, what if I walk out into the middle of the road? Oh, no, Papa, you wouldn't do that. Just walk in a straight line. Well, okay, I said, that's what I'll do. And I had to tell him everything.

I said, right, stop. We're going to have to cross the road here. His eyes were still closed. I said, no, we're going to have to stop. I'm careful now. We're coming off the pavement.

His eyes were still closed. The only time he opened his eyes was when a big bus stopped beside us to let somebody off. He had to check what that was. But the thing was, he trusted me all the way from just after the house, all the way to the shop.

I said, that's us. We're arriving at the shop. And I got me thinking. I said, isn't that really how it should be with us, with Jesus, that we would trust him like that?

He trusted me that I wouldn't take him out on the road. He said, just walk in a straight line. And you know, every day we should do the same with Jesus. And go to him and say, Lord, help me just to walk with you.

[ 7 : 58 ] And will you guide me and show me the way to go? Because, you know, often we don't know. We can make the wrong choices. We can do the wrong things. Help me, Lord, to do the right things.

Help me to be kind and wise and careful and helpful and obedient. And help me, above all, to love you. And, Lord, take me all the way through life.

And at the end, take me home to heaven with yourself. Couldn't ask for anything better or to have anything better in your life. So let's now say the Lord's Prayer together.

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[ 8 : 59 ] For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. Amen. We're going to sing again now from Psalm 37 in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm number 37.

We're going to sing verses 10 to 16. Psalm 37, verses 10 to 16. For yet a little while and then the wicked shall not be.

His place thou shalt consider well, but it thou shalt not see. But by inheritance the earth the meek ones shall possess. They also shall delight themselves in an abundant peace.

The wicked plots against the just, and Adam whets his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him, because his day he coming seeth. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and bent their bow to slay the poor and needy, and to kill men of an upright way.

But their own sword, which they have drawn, shall enter their own heart. Their bows, which they have bent, shall break, and into pieces part.

[ 10 : 13 ] A little that a just man hath is more and better far than is the wealth of many such as lewd and wicked are. That's on page 253 of the Psalm book, Psalm 37, verses 10 to 16.

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[ 11 : 45 ] The wicked not sagates the just and not him raise his deed.

The Lord shall affect him because his stay he coming see.

The wicked have drawn out the sword and bent their bow to slay.

The poor and he thee thee and to kill and all time of night way.

But their own sword which they have drawn shall enter their own heart.

[ 13 : 08 ] heart their boat which they have been shall break and into pieces heart.

A little that touch that just man have is more and better far than is the wealth of many such as good and we and we have to read God's words which we do in Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew chapter 27. Matthew 27. Matthew 27. Reading from the beginning through to verse 31. when morning came all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death and they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

Then when Judas his betrayer saw that Jesus was condemned he changed his mind and brought back the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders saying I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.

[ 14 : 54 ] They said what is that to us? See to it yourself. And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple he departed and he went and hanged himself.

But the chief priests taking the pieces of silver said it is not lawful to put them into the treasury since it is blood money. So they took counsel and bought with him the potash field as a burial place for strangers.

Therefore that field has been called the field of blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah saying and they took the 30 pieces of silver the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel.

And they gave them for the potash field as the Lord directed them. Now Jesus stood before the governor and the governor asked him are you the king of the Jews? Jesus said you have said so. But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders he gave no answer. Then Pilate said to him do you not hear how many things they testify against you?

[ 16 : 09 ] But he gave him no answer. Not even to a single charge. So that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted.

And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had gathered Pilate said to them whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ.

For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Besides while he was sitting on the judgment seat his wife sent word to him. Have nothing to do with that righteous man.

For I have suffered much because of him today in a dream. Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.

The governor again said to them which of the two do you want me to release for you? And they said Barabbas. Pilate said to them then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?

[ 17 : 19 ] They all said let him be crucified. And he said why? What evil has he done? But they shouted all the more let him be crucified.

So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing but rather that a riot was beginning. He took water and washed his hands before the crowd saying I am innocent of this man's blood.

See to it your shells. And all the people answered his blood be on us and on our children. Then he released for them Barabbas and having scourged Jesus delivered him to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters. And they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him.

And twisting together a crown of thorns they put it on his head. And put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him saying hail king of the Jews.

[ 18 : 21 ] And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him they stripped him of the robe. And put his own clothes on him.

And led him away to crucify him. And so on. Amen. And may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. And let us again bow in prayer. Oh Lord we are very conscious that we need you at all times.

We have just read your word. And sometimes we find it so difficult to understand and comprehend. That we are reading there of the second person of the Godhead.

The one by whom all things were made. And yet we find that he has come as a man into this world. And he has so allowed himself to be brutalized.

And so allowed himself to be abused. And he went into the place of sinners to experience the wrath of God. We were remembering this last week.

[ 19 : 29 ] And we give thanks for the opportunity of meeting at the Lord's Supper. We give thanks for the table of the Lord. A time to remember what Jesus has done for us.

We are aware that we should be remembering this all the time. But we are so prone to forget. Just like we have our war memorials in the here and there.

And the list so often of people who gave their lives. And every so often we do come to remember lest we forget. And it is important that we do when we remember the cost for our freedom.

But we remember above all the cost for our spiritual freedom. Our release that was found in Jesus. And so we pray that you will help us and that you will bless us as we come under your word today. Lord, we need you at every step. We need you in our going in and in our going out. In our sitting down and in our rising up. Lord, there are times when we have to confess that we feel self-reliant and self-sufficient.

[ 20 : 35 ] We feel that we are on top of things. And there are times that we might forget you. But Lord, it doesn't take long for that to change.

And again, we discover our vulnerability. And we discover that we are not who we thought we were. But we give thanks, Lord, that your ear is open to our cry. And we give thanks, O Lord, that you answer way beyond even what we ask or think.

Give us a spiritual eyes to see the answers to prayer. Because so often when we pray, we expect an answer in a particular way. But you often surprise us.

You often answer in a different way. In fact, your word says, by fearful works unto their prayers, an answer doth express. And so we must be ready for that.

And to realize that your ways are not our ways. So often we stand before the mystery of your providence. And we do have to confess that in this world there will be times that we will never understand.

[ 21 : 40 ] Or be able to comprehend your providence. Because sometimes it is so baffling. It can hurt. It can be so sore. And so we pray, Lord, especially for those today whose hearts are broken.

Whose hearts are sore. Those, Lord, who are struggling with the mystery of your providence. And whether it is of recent times or even further away, it's still the same.

The pain is still there. And so, Lord, we pray that you'll be gracious. Lord, our God, we pray that you'll bless those who are in need of you today. We remember little Lucy Beth.

But we remember all who are in hospital. All who are laid aside at this time. We commit to your care and keeping. Those undergoing treatment or waiting for it or who have had it. Those with regard to surgery.

Remember those who are old and no longer able to do for themselves. There's almost a reversal where we go back from being so dependent as little children to a stage in life where we become dependent on others.

[ 22 : 47 ] And, O Lord, our God, help us in all the different stages of our life to look to you and to trust in you so that our dependence will be daily upon the living and through God.

Help us to remember that you are our maker. Help us to remember that it is in you that we live, move, and have our being. And so, we ask that you'll be gracious to us and do us good.

We pray, Lord, that you will bless all who mourn and all whose hearts are heavy and sore. Do them good. Lift them up, we pray. Lord, we pray to bless us as a nation.

We ask for your guidance. We pray for everybody who are in positions of authority in our land. We pray for all who are in government, whether that be in Westminster or in Holyrood or here locally in our council.

We ask, Lord, that you'll give wisdom. Leave us not to ourselves because our own judgments are so often not the right judgments. We need the wisdom that is from above.

[ 23 : 46 ] Help us, Lord, so to look. And we give thanks, Lord, for all who do look to you. And we do remember at this time, Kate Forbes, we give thanks for her.

And whatever people's political allegiance may be, we give thanks, Lord, for the courage that she has displayed. And we pray, Lord, that you will watch over her and keep her.

And in many ways, we have come to see how many do not lay hold upon your word. Because while she spoke, she didn't just speak with regard to herself, but she spoke with regard to what your word says.

And it brings us to see how many people cannot stand what your word says or don't believe it. But people don't have a knowledge of your word anymore. Oh, Lord, forgive us as a nation for the way we've turned our back upon you.

And so we ask, oh, Lord, that your word might become more prominent so that we may come to discover that it is the way of life. That you are the God who shows us the right way to go.

[ 24 : 55 ] We're commanded to trust in the Lord with all our heart and to lean not to our own understanding. In all our ways to acknowledge you and you will direct our paths. And we couldn't seek anything greater than to have our paths directed from above.

So, Lord, we pray to bless us. Bless the nations of this world who remember the Ukraine and think it's over a year of bloodshed. And it's been a hard, a terrible year out there.

Oh, Lord, we would long to see peace come when there are those who are just for war, those who do not want peace. Oh, Lord, we pray that you will overrule and overturn and that you will bring peace.

Lord, we think of Turkey and Syria and we have to confess how quickly it is that we can forget the harrowing pictures that we see. But, Lord, we know that there is intense and immense suffering. Because lives have been shattered and broken. And we, Lord, ask that you will bring healing and help. And that you will bring provision. And that the structure of cities might be restored so that water will be, the things that we rely on in life will be given.

[ 26 : 14 ] But your word also reminds us that as the end time comes, that there will be wars and rumors of wars, that there will be earthquakes in various places.

It's like the very creation that is groaning. And we ourselves are groaning, looking forward to our redemption. Looking forward to, indeed, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Watch over us, then, we pray, and do us good. Cleanse us from our every sin, we pray. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. We're going to sing now in Psalm 2.

And this is from Psalm 2. And we're going to sing verses 1 to 7. Psalm 2, verses 1 to 7.

That's on page 2. Why do the heathen rage? Why do the peoples plot in vain? Earth's kings combine in enmity. Her rulers join against God's reign.

[ 27 : 13 ] They take their stand against the Lord and challenge his anointed one. Let us break off their chains from us. With their restraints let us be done. The one enthroned in heaven laughs.

The Lord on high derides them all. Then he rebukes them in his wrath, his rage and terror on them fall. The Lord has made it known to them, My chosen king I have installed.

On Zion, my own holy hill, he is the one whom I have called. The king then solemnly declares, I will proclaim the Lord's decree. Today your father I become.

You are my son, he said to me. Verses 1 to 7, Psalm 2. That's on page 2. And sing Psalms. Why do the heathen nations rage? Why do the people's bought in vain?

Earth's kings combine in enmity.

[ 28 : 30 ] And runes on against the Lord. And runes on against the Lord. O day, they take their stand against the Lord, and challenge His annoys Him on.

Let us break up their chains from us, with every space let us be done.

The one in one in ever last, the Lord Almighty, He hath them all.

Then He rebukes them in His path, His rage and terror call them all.

The Lord has made it known to them, my chosen King, my half is called.

[ 30 : 08 ] On Zion, I, O holy hill, He is the one whom I have called.

The King then solemnly heard, I will proclaim the Lord's decree.

To be your Father, I be God. You are my Son, He said to me.

Let's turn again to the chapter we read in Matthew 27, and focusing on verse 22, one of the great questions in the Bible. Pilate said to them, Matthew 27, verse 22, Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?

As we know, questions are a vital part of life. Some people are always asking questions. Other people, they hardly ever ask questions. They kind of just take life as it is and just get by like that.

[ 31 : 44 ] Children are always asking questions. It's one of the ways they learn. We often have to ask very important questions in life. And this question that we have here is a question of absolute paramount importance.

In fact, probably there's only one other question that is equal in Scripture. And that's a question the Philippian jailer asked. What must I do to be saved?

Remember the reply, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. And here we have another question. What? That's what the question that Pilate asks here.

He's asking this question. What shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ? Now we could look at this in different ways. We could look at it as if we're going to examine exactly these words as to who Jesus is and Christ and all that that involves and entails.

And that would take up a whole sermon in itself. We could look at it focusing on the choice that is made between Barabbas and Jesus because that's what prompts the question from Pilate.

[ 32 : 57 ] But it's a question that everybody has to answer. Because whether a person vocally asks it, it's a question that Jesus is asking of everybody.

What are you going to do with me? That's a question Jesus asks worldwide. Not just here today, but everywhere. Because every single person is one day going to have to come before Jesus and give an account of what they did, of how they answered that question in this world.

That's quite a searching, solemn thought. And just in light of the communion, I was thinking last week we actually read this chapter, that great question, what shall I do with Jesus?

Because we had our communion, we had our wonderful communion last Lord's Day. And the Sunday morning was a beautiful morning.

But that question is asked. And I would urge any here today who were here last week, or even if you weren't here last week, what are you doing with Jesus?

[ 34 : 09 ] Because, you know, the communion is such a special time, such an important time. It's a time where Jesus is specially present. And to let that slip, to let it go by.

Why? Because a lot of people say, oh, you know, it's time I came out on the Lord's side. Well, it is. Because it's one of the worst things of your heart is towards the Lord and for the Lord.

And you're wanting, you're saying to yourself, you know, it's one of the things I hope before I leave this world. I want to take my place at the Lord's table. I want to confess and show that Jesus means a lot to me.

He means everything to me. Well, you see, we're not in charge. We're not in control of our lives. We don't know when one day we'll be taken away. So it's imperative that we don't let these opportunities slip.

So if Jesus is your Lord, then come out on his side. Make it clear. What must I do? What will I do with Jesus? But this morning, what I want us to look at is just how different people reacted to Jesus that we find in this chapter.

[ 35 : 17 ] Because it tells us through that the different responses that go on in people's lives towards the Lord Jesus Christ. And the first group that we see here are the chief priests and the elders.

And for a long time, we know exactly what their response was to Jesus, what they wanted to do with Jesus. You know, every picture tells a story.

And we see that in the previous chapter. And we see of just the way they treated Jesus. And we see it also in this chapter.

We see of how they abused him and of how they hit him and they smote him. And they were so filled with spite against him. And they hated him because he claimed to be the son of God.

And to them, that was utter blasphemy. They saw him as an imposter. And they were saying, how dare he claim to be the son of God.

[ 36 : 21 ] And you know, it's quite extraordinary. They didn't understand. And if any group of people should have understood that this was the son of God, that this was the Messiah, it was these men.

Because they were the studiers of the law. They spent their day studying the law. It wasn't that Jesus just arrived all of a sudden on the scene. They had the whole of the Old Testament.

And it was their daily study. And if any people should have been prepared and come to understand that this is the Messiah. Because Jesus, he said to them often enough, the scripture is being fulfilled right before you.

But you know that problem? They were prejudiced. They were bigoted. They had their own mind set. And they refused to believe what was staring them in the eyes.

And you know, that is often the case. That's often how it is with people. You know, you've got to remember, these are people who lived by the law. And the Pharisees, and this is what makes it so sad.

[ 37 : 32 ] The Pharisees, they wanted to be right with God. They had this idea, but they didn't know God. They didn't know the God that was revealed in the word. But they lived by the law.

And what they did was, in order to try and be right with God, they added law after law after law upon the law of God.

And in fact, life became intolerable. They didn't know anything of the strength of the Lord. They didn't know the joy of the Lord. They didn't know his grace, his freedom, his love.

They were just bound by all these laws. And they were adding and adding and adding to laws. And it became an intolerable burden for everybody. Now, when Jesus came, he didn't listen to their man-made laws.

Yes, he kept the law of God perfectly. But not their laws. And they couldn't bear him. They were incensed by him. And so they saw him as a massive threat to their authority, to their power, and to their control.

[ 38 : 43 ] And, you know, that's part of the great problem. You look right around the world, and you can see to yourself nearly all the problems that are happening in this world.

Certainly at political levels, at government levels, throughout with different countries, often comes down to this power, control, authority.

People want it. But it's not just on a large scale. You look at all the problems in a home. If there are problems in a home, it often comes down to these things.

Wanting power, wanting control, wanting authority. It's the same within churches. It's the reason why there's been so many divisions in churches down throughout the years. Power, authority, control.

It's the same within communities. It's the same within councils. It's the same in the workplace. It's the same within countries. It's all about power. You look at all the wars are taking place.

[ 39 : 45 ] And this is what was happening to these people there. They were losing their power and their authority. Because Jesus was somebody that the people loved.

It tells us that they were saying of Jesus, this man speaks with an authority. Not like the scribes or the Pharisees. And that did their head in. They didn't like that.

Because they thought they were the power. They were in control. And so they wanted rid of Jesus. And you see, Jesus was exposing, really, he was exposing what they were like.

And they got angry. You know, I often think, I might be wrong, but sometimes when you see people who are really angry against Christianity.

Who are really angry against the Christian faith. And I say to myself, why are they so angry? You know, there's a lot of people, they don't think anything of it.

[ 40 : 42 ] They just shrug their shoulders and let it pass by. But some people get really hot under the collar and angry. And they want rid of the Bible. They want rid of Sundays. And they want rid of everything. Why?

Well, I often think because our wrong air deep down has been struck. They might not recognize it or know it. Why is there, why has an anger been provoked in so many people against the Bible?

Well, I think the only logical thing is that our wrong air has been struck. And people may not realize it. But why do you want to remove and eradicate the Bible and Christianity unless it's bothering you?

And if it's bothering you, why is it bothering? Because it's God's voice pushing down into the heart. That's why. And that's why these people, they had to get rid of Jesus.

Because he was provoking them. And they were not measuring up to what he was saying. And so they had to get rid of him. But there was another reason.

[ 41 : 52 ] And Pilate figured it out right away. And we read of that in verse 18. Pilate recognized that they had delivered him up because of envy. They were envious of him.

And side by side with the desire for power and control, envy is a cancer that causes no end of heartache. Remember that envy is murderous.

And if you discern envy within your own heart, ask the Lord to deliver you from it. Because envy can parade itself in all kinds of masks and try to shield it and cover it and let out.

You're not envious at all. But Pilate knew they had delivered Jesus up because of envy. They were jealous of him. And you look out through the Bible. We've said it before. Envy equals murder.

Cain was envious of his brother Abel. And he killed him. Joseph's brothers were envious of Joseph.

[ 42 : 56 ] And so they sold him as a slave. Saul was envious of David. And he tried to kill him.

Those in the days of Daniel were envious of his position before the king.

And so they had him thrown into the den of lions. Envy is no little thing. Its end is death. And here is Jesus.

And he's been delivered up because of envy. I wonder how much heartache throughout people's lives have been brought about because one person is jealous of another.

Pray against it. And I wonder how much problems have been caused in the church because of it. I said this before. I remember in college the late Professor Douglas MacMillan saying to us, make sure, brothers, that you pray daily when you get out into the ministry that you will never be envious or jealous of another of your fellow ministers because he said it causes problems.

And you know it's true. Being jealous of somebody else. It can cause all because the moment that jealousy in the heart, once it starts to break out into action, then it causes all kinds of problems.

[ 44 : 22 ] So we see that they had given him up because of envy. Move on very quickly. We see there's another person here, and he features at the very beginning of the chapter, well, from verse 3 on.

And that's Judas. And Judas had this question as well. What will I do with Jesus? You see, Judas stands as one of the most solemn warnings in Scripture because here was a man who began so well.

In fact, he was one of the men that Jesus chose. A man that went with Jesus for three years, the three greatest years this world ever saw. Where Jesus went about healing, preaching, teaching, interacting with people, the son of God in our nature.

Judas went everywhere with Jesus. In fact, it would appear that Judas was quite a shrewd, smart character because he was given the bag. In other words, he was a treasurer amongst the disciples. He was given a position of privilege. And at no point along the way did the other disciples think that Judas was going to turn out the way he did.

[ 45 : 32 ] Because when Jesus said, one of you is going to betray me, none of them automatically said, oh, that'll be Judas. Didn't think like that. Because Judas appeared just to be the same as all of them.

But the problem was Judas, although Judas wasn't, I've seen a painting where Judas is looking like this really sinister, horrible character.

He would have looked just the very same as the others. He would have appeared the same. There was nothing differentiating Judas except in his heart, which Jesus read and Jesus saw.

And Jesus said, one of you is a devil. Again, none of them. One of you has a devil. None of them thought, oh, I'll be Judas. But the problem with Judas, he had a rival to Jesus in the heart.

And that was money. And it tells us that he was a thief because he used to dip into the bag, the money bag that they had. He used to help himself. That's what scripture tells us.

[ 46 : 30 ] So you see, money was an ongoing problem in Judas' life. And there came a day when Judas had to make a decision. Is it this money that I love or is it Jesus?

And you see, the problem of money is our God, or money is our goal. We can never, ever, ever get enough. It doesn't matter how much you have. You have to have more. And that was the problem with Judas.

He needed more. And so when the opportunity came for 30 pieces of silver to betray Jesus, and much on all, though I believe Judas liked Jesus, he didn't love him, all his heart, but he liked Jesus, it came to the point where he said, no, I'm betraying Jesus.

Money won. And you know, we've got to watch against that. Because what Jesus tells us, what will it profit a person if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?

A person could amass the greatest fortune possible. And we know we live in a day where there are people who are multi-billionaires. But if you lose your soul, what is it? It counts for nothing.

[ 47 : 40 ] It's a solemn, solemn warning to us all. This is what happened in the life of Judas, that money became more important to him at the end of the day than Jesus did.

And it's, as I say, it's one of the most solemn thoughts in our life where we can find that we would be prepared to sell Jesus.

I think that there are people who would probably do that. There are probably people who, in order to get on in the world, are prepared to sell their soul in order to make it.

to make it. Well, Judas stands as one of the grimmest warnings. Because we see the end of Judas when he answered the question, what will I do with Jesus?

But then, again, very briefly, the man who actually asks the question, who is Pilate, Pilate says, what shall I do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?

[ 48 : 42 ] Because he recognizes something has to be done. And Pilate is facing this great dilemma because as Pilate looks at Jesus, he recognizes that standing before him is an innocent man.

Now, Pilate isn't a good man. History will show us the kind of person that he was. Pilate is a politician. Pilate is the kind of person who he will do what favors himself at the end of the day. But he represented the law. He stood for the government. He stood for the law. He stood for what was right or supposed to be right. And Pilate knew that the correct decision at that moment was to release Jesus, let him go.

But Pilate had a problem because there was a big crowd in front of him that were demanding the death of Jesus. Not just any death, but the worst death possible reserved for slaves and criminals, crucifixion.

Pilate's wife came to him and he said to Pilate, listen, whatever you do, do not condemn that man. I had a dream about him and she called Jesus a righteous man.

[ 49 : 57 ] Got to let him go. And Pilate knew what was right. And so he's facing this dilemma and he tries, first of all, evasive action. And he tries a bit of compromise and he thought, right, this is what I'll do.

I'll get this guy, Barabbas, one of the worst going, a notorious terrorist. You could term him that. He was a notorious disruptor of the society.

He was in prison. I'll get one of the worst guys possible and I'll put him against Jesus. It's obvious who they'll in the end go for. They're not going to pick Barabbas. So he's trying to evasive action. What does the crowd do? They call for Barabbas. He wasn't expecting that. And so he's facing this dilemma. And you know, there's a lot of people in life try the evasive action with regard to the gospel.

You know, some people, I say, they've grown up maybe under the gospel and as time goes on, their conscience begins to bother them. Maybe they'll send their children to Sunday school. They don't come themselves.

[ 51 : 00 ] And you know, it's one of the wonderful things to see so many children and so many parents coming to church. That aside, but then people sometimes say, they'll try, what they'll do, they'll come to church now and again and they'll say, well, God will be happy with that.

But then the rest of the time they don't think and they're trying to compromise. They're trying to sort of have a wee bit of a religious side to keep God happy and they're trying then just to live the other way any, the rest of the time.

It doesn't work like that. See, there's no, in battle, they talk of no man's land. There doesn't exist a no man's land in the Christian faith. You're either with the Lord or you're against Him.

You're either for Him or you're against Him. There's no in between. You're either there or you're not. And so it's important that we nail our colors to the mast.

So Pilate is facing a problem. In fact, even as Jesus scourged, a Roman flogging was a fearful thing. And I think he thought that through all these things they'll say, no, let him go.

[ 52 : 08 ] But no, they don't. And at the end, Pilate, he gives in because he doesn't want to lose his popularity. He doesn't want to lose face.

That's more important to him than doing what is right. I wonder how many people have done that in life. You know the right decision. You know what's right. But you take the other way because you want the praise of man more than the praise of God.

That's what it said about some of the people who were following Jesus secretly in the day. They didn't want it to be discovered that they were followers of Jesus because they might have been thrown out of the synagogue.

And they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. It still happens to this day. Well, that's where the kind of person Pilate was. He preferred to do what was going to grant him favor with people than to do what was right.

And so he delivers Jesus to be crucified. and he's, I think it's one of the most, I think it's words that send a shiver down your spine. Where they cry out, that awful cry, when Pilate, he washes his hands saying, I'm innocent to this man's blood.

[ 53 : 27 ] And they cry out, his blood be upon us and our children. And you look at the history, the history of the Jewish race, and see the blood.

You know, it's a fearful thought. But before we finish, there are two other things I just want to highlight. And one was picked on last weekend.

I thought Ian McCritchie spoke about this absolutely beautifully in the service. And he mentioned the women that we read about in verse 55, 56.

There were also many women there, this is, at the crucifixion, looking on from a distance who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him.

Isn't that lovely? Galilee was away up in the north. These women had followed Jesus every step of the way. And they'd followed him when it was dangerous.

[ 54 : 24 ] They followed him when he was despised. They followed him to the very end. And some of these women came to administer, we see, to embalm his body afterwards.

But of course, he was risen. And I love the commitment of these women. What will we do with Jesus? Well, follow him to the very end. You know, these women, these women will have a high place in glory.

These were women who followed Jesus through thick and thin. Didn't matter the cost. They were going to follow. What an example to us. And then there's one other, before we finish, tells us in verse 57, when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus.

Tells us just very starkly there what it is. But if we went to John's gospel, John tells us there, after these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews. That's the very thing we're talking about. He's one of these secret disciples. But you know, there came the point, he says, what am I going to do with Jesus? What does he do?

[ 55 : 43 ] When it could cost his life, when it was the most dangerous time, because Jesus had been put to death, bar John, the followers of Jesus, have run.

They're nowhere to be found. They forsook him and fled. Here's this man, who had been a secret disciple. He comes up and he says, I'm with Jesus. Give me the body of Jesus.

I want to bury him and put him in a good tomb. But another man comes along. It's not mentioned. Here, but it does. And John's gospel tells. The other man was Nicodemus.

The man who came to Jesus under the cover of darkness. Again, a high-ranking Pharisee. Didn't want people to know. You know, when push comes to shove, they throw their colors.

Nail their colors to the mast. They come out of the darkness. Nicodemus had come in the darkness. Today he's come into the light. What about you? Are you still hiding in the shadows and the darkness?

[ 56 : 47 ] Or have you come to the light to own, to acknowledge, to display that Jesus is your Lord? Well, it's time you did. I know there are people here and I believe you love the Lord.

But you need to come out. You need to take that stand, to take that step. What shall I do with Jesus? It's called Christ. And if you've never come to accept him, then it's time you did.

Because he's offering himself. We had our communion last week. Here's the next week after the communion. Time's going. One day, the offer will not be any...

You know, it's wonderful. We have, quite often, you'll go to the shop and you'll see something and say, offer, there's a price reduction, offer on until such and such a date.

That's it. And after that, it reverts back to normal price. You know, the offer of the gospel right now doesn't have any until such date.

[ 57 : 53 ] But let me tell you there is a date. And the offer of the gospel will be offered until Jesus returns. And he's going to come all of a sudden.

We don't know when. It's going to be when everything is just as normal. That's what he tells us. It tells us like in the day of the flood. They ate, they drank, they gave in marriage. It was a normal day and then the flood.

And he says, it's going to be exactly like that when I return. And when he returns, there will be no more offers. But today there is.

It's as clear and as fresh as ever it was. Well, today you accept Jesus if you already haven't. Let's pray. Lord our God, we pray to bless us. We give thanks for our time together.

We pray that this word may go deep down in our heart that it might affect us, change us. Help us, Lord, to stand on your side. Help us, Lord, to be courageous.

[ 58 : 51 ] We know that so often we don't want to be, so often we prefer to hide in the shadows. We might want to be the secret disciple. It's amazing how things propel us out from the shadows and the darkness.

And we pray that that might be so for people here today. Watch over us and bless our homes, bless our families. Grant health and strength, we pray. Do us good.

Lord, we need you. And we ask that your grace and your mercy and peace may indwell us and surround us. Take away from us and our every sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

Amen. We're going to conclude singing in Psalm 57. And this is in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 57, verses 1 to 3.

Psalm 57, verses 1 to 3. Be merciful to me, O God, thy mercy unto me do thou extend, because my soul doth put our trust in thee.

[ 59 : 53 ] Yea, in the shadow of thy wings my refuge I will place, until these sad calamities do wholly overpass. My cry I will cause to ascend unto the Lord most high.

To God who doth all things for me perform most perfectly. From heaven he shall send down, and me from his reproach defend, that would devour me.

God is truth, and mercy forth shall send. One, two, three, four stanzas. Be merciful to me, O God. Be merciful to me, O God.

Thy mercy unto me, through thou extend, because my soul doth put her trust in thee.

yea, in the shadow of thy wings, my refuge I will place, until these sad calamities who hold me overpass.

[ 61 : 39 ] My cry I will cost you to ascend, and to the Lord most high.

to God who doth all things for me, her form most perfectly.

from him he shall send down, and me from his reproach defend, that would be, and to the Lord most high.

that would be, my God is truth, and mercy forth shall send.

I'll go to the front door. Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest and abide upon each one of you now, and forevermore. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 63 : 04 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Honor, Honor, myész, Cyani from Jack, Franciselet, Choctwitch, ■■■■ and Amen.