

# Judas

*The Master's Men*

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Amen. I want you to take your Bible and turn with me to Matthew's gospel chapter 26 and verse 47. Matthew's gospel chapter 26 and verse 27, and we've been looking these Sunday mornings for quite a number of weeks now. In fact, for 15, 14, 15 weeks at "The Master's Men," we have looked at the disciples of the Lord Jesus and we're looking at the last one this morning, Judas Iscariot. He always appears last in the list of the twelve. No matter, when you look at that list, Matthew, Mark, Luke's account, or Dr. Luke's account in Acts, Judas always appears last.

I wonder if I were to ask you this morning, who do you suppose is the most despised man in American history? How about Benedict Arnold? When the American colonies rebelled against English tyranny, Benedict Arnold was a successful businessman in New Haven in Connecticut, and shortly after the beginning, the start of hostilities, Arnold raised a little group of men and he received a colonel's commission in this fledgling army against the English, and because Arnold distinguished himself as a soldier, he had the complete confidence of General George Washington, and as a reward for his service, Arnold was made the head of government in the state of Philadelphia. However, because of his lack of wisdom, and because of the way he administered affairs, Arnold was court-martialed, and he was severely reprimanded, and that reprimand deeply humiliated the proud Arnold, and he was determined to get even and so he opened communications with Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander, and Arnold made a pact to surrender West Point to the enemy. The attempt was discovered and thwarted, and Arnold fled to the English side where he was appointed brigadier general in his majesty's service. And history, especially American history, remembers Benedict Arnold as the man who sold out, but in our study of the word of God this morning, we're confronted with another man who sold out to the enemy. His name is Judas Iscariot. We do not know when, where, how, or why he became a follower of the Lord Jesus. We do know, however, that he was chosen by the Savior and he was given the greatest opportunity ever offered to mortal man. His name might have been immortalized forever, written into the foundation stones of the celestial city, instead, his name has gone down as synonymous with treachery and shame.

The name Judas is simply the Greek form of the name Judah. Some say it comes from a root meaning Jehovah leads. Others feel that it comes from a root meaning one who is the

object of praise. Whatever way you take it this morning, it's a paradox. If it means Jehovah leads, then there was never an individual who was more led by Satan than Judas Iscariot. If it means one who is the object of praise, then there was never an individual more unworthy of praise than Judas Iscariot. The name Iscariot simply means a town by the name of Kerioth and Kerioth was a town that was 23 miles south of the city of Jerusalem and seven miles from the town of Hebron. You say, "Well, Denis, why is that so important?" It's so important because of this reason: Judas is the only non-Galilean in the whole group of the twelve. He's the only one who came from Judah. He's the only one who came from the southern part of Israel. He's the only Judean Jew. The rest of the apostles were all from the Galilee region and it may indicate right from the very start that Judas was not one of the boys. Southern Jews usually felt superior to those who came from Galilee. The people from Galilee were looked down upon by those who came from the area of Judah, and so Judas may have looked down on the rest of the apostles with a pride and an arrogance that deepened as time went on.

The wreckage of Judah's life is strewn far and wide. We pick up a piece of his story here, and another piece here, and another piece there, and we try to sit down, and we try to patch the pieces together, but we're left with many questions and few answers. Where, why, when did he become a disciple of the Lord Jesus? At what point in his life did things go sour in the life of Judas Iscariot? Was Judas Iscariot predestined to be the betrayer of the Lord thus, he was really forced to play the part? I think Judas began like the others began but he never held hold of the truth by faith. He was never changed like the rest. He was never transformed like the rest and while they were increasing in faith as sons of God, here was a man who was becoming more and more a child of hell. What a man.

You say, "Well, how does Judas apply to my life this morning?" Well, let's see. Ulster's cursed with decisions. People who have raised a hand, signed a card, walked an aisle, made a profession, people who have come from Baptist backgrounds, Brethren backgrounds, Free Presbyterian backgrounds, I don't care what your background is this morning, I want you to go round the foundations of your faith again to make sure that you're a child of God. You could be a child of this church, a member of this church, and die and go to hell. You make sure this morning you're a child of the Lord, that you're not deceiving yourself, others, and trying to deceive the Lord.

Look at Matthew 26. I want to look at his life this morning from a threefold perspective. I want you to see, first of all, what I'm calling the outward show, deception; and then I want you to see the inward slide, degeneration; and then I want you to see the downward step, damnation. The outward show, deception; the inward slide, degeneration; the downward step, destruction.

Look at verse 47 of Matthew 26. "And while he yet spake," the Lord Jesus, verse 47, Matthew 26, "lo, Judas, one of the twelve," time and again you have that phrase, "Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus,

and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him."

Look at chapter 27 and verse 3, "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders." You know remorse is not repentance. He said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

And then over to Acts chapter 1 very quickly. Acts chapter 1. The Acts of the Apostles, chapter 1 and Peter's speaking, and in verse 18 he says this, "Now this man," he's talking about Judas, this man, "this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." Obviously the rope breaking or the branch breaking, he was hanging over a ravine. Look at verse 23, "And they appointed two," they're putting now in place a replacement for Judas, "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men," he's the omniscient God. I tell you this, he knows your heart this morning and he knows mine. He knows the show. He knows the pretense. He knows the mask. Knows all about it. "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."

I want you to think about the outward show, deception. There can be no doubt about it that Judas was good at play-acting. He put up a good outward show pretending to be a sincere and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus. He was accepted without question by the fellowship of the rest. They looked upon Judas as a man of integrity, a man of fidelity, a man of loyalty, but Judas was such a hypocrite and he was such a good hypocrite that none of the disciples ever suspected Judas of being a false follower of the Lord Jesus. Here was a man who was living a life of deception. I want you to see his deception in three areas this morning very quickly. I want you to see his deception in his witness. You remember that the Lord Jesus had spent all night seeking the face of the Father before calling the twelve disciples and he chose twelve that they might be a witness for him, that he might send them forth to preach. My friends, Judas was a preacher. Judas was a proclamer. Judas was a preacher with the other disciples to do work in teams, evangelistic work, to tell others about the Lord Jesus. Judas had in all probability shared with the others in casting out demons, possibly he had healed the sick in the name of the Lord. He was among those who rejoice in evident evangelical victories. You remember the disciples came back in one occasion and they said, "Lord, even the devils are subject to

us." And yet in spite of the fact that that he was chosen by Christ, that he was living with Christ, and that he was working for Christ, he wasn't saved. He played the game of hypocrisy. He was deceptive in relation to the witness that he gave.

I wonder what about you this morning. Maybe you're here and you're seeking to serve God. Maybe you're a Sunday school teacher. Maybe you're involved in the work of good news clubs. Maybe you're a pastor. Maybe you're a preacher. Maybe you're an elder. Maybe you're a deacon. Maybe you're a member of this church or that church. But that doesn't mean that you're right with God. In 1735, John Wesley set out as a missionary to the state of Georgia in the United States of America. It was then a colony in America, and John Wesley was seeking to bring the lost to Jesus Christ. And after two years of work there, he discovered this, he said, "I went out to convert the Indians, but who shall convert me?" I wonder am I speaking to someone this morning and you're trying to fool people? Do you know in your heart that you are one thing and yet people think on the outside that you're something else? Do people view you in one way and yet you know this morning in your heart and God knows that you're living another way? I wonder how we grasp this. Could it be that you serve on the church board, could it be that you sing in the choir, could it be you go out in evangelistic trips, could it be that you preach from the pulpit and yet you have never been born again by the Spirit of God, a true work of grace has never been wrought in your heart? "But Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto you, I never knew you."

Judas participated in the work of God, and yet, my dear friends, he never knew the God of the work. He was deceptive in his witness. Something else, he was deceptive in his work. The twelve disciples needed a treasurer, and Judas was given this position of honor by the other disciples. He was a treasurer in this favored group. In fact, he was the holder of the only office they ever had. They never had another office among the twelve, just the office of treasurer. But you know my dear friends, the Bible tells us that from the very beginning that he bare what was put therein. Turn back for a moment to John's gospel chapter 12 very quickly, John's gospel chapter 12. It's an interesting portion of scripture. Verse number 6 says this, it's the story of Mary pouring out the ointment upon the person of Christ and Judas complaining and the rest of the disciples whinging and joining in and it says in verse 6, Judas says, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag," you see, he was the treasure. He was the boy that kept the money, "and had the bag and bare what was put therein." Another translation puts it like this, as the keeper of the money, he used to help himself to what was put therein. No doubt it only started in a small way, just a coin or two, and then his thieving became regular. The Lord Jesus Christ, of course, knew that Judas was beginning to sell his soul for the love of money. It wasn't because Judas loved the poor. He couldn't care less about the poor. He loved the money. You see, greed was beginning to grip his heart, eat away at him like a cancer. It was secretly and silently devouring him and later he goes to the chief priest and he says, "What will you give me and I will deliver him unto you?" And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. As far as the eleven was concerned, he was a man of integrity, fidelity, honesty, sincerity, but he was deceiving them.

I wonder, is that what you're doing this morning? You have a responsible position in life but you're pilfering from the funds. You're diddling the books and you're pocketing the money. You're cheating your employer. Oh, you thought at the start you just wanted to borrow just a little to get you over that crisis, but you've discovered, my dear friends, that sin will take you further than you want to go, that sin will keep you longer than you want to stay, that sin will cost you more than you want to pay. Look at Judas. He was deceptive in his witness. He was deceptive in his work, something else, he was deceptive in his worship. Can you see Judas sitting down at the table to celebrate the Passover with the other disciples, Jesus Christ himself being there in the midst? The disciples never suspected for one moment that he was a traitor; even at the Last Supper, before he went out into the darkness of the night, they never suspected him. And when the Lord Jesus gave Judas the sop, the disciples couldn't bring themselves to believe that Judas was the traitor, even when he left the table and went out into the darkness of the night. Never for one moment did they suspect that he was going to betray the Lord Jesus.

Do you remember what the Savior said to him? "What thou doest, do quickly." You know what the other ones thought? The other ones thought because Judas was the treasurer, that he was the guy that was ministering to the poor, the other ones thought that he was going out to minister to the poor again. Such was his reputation among the eleven disciples. Even as they sat at the Last Supper, Judas was deceptive. He deceived the disciples, but never once did he deceive the Savior. Do you remember what the Master said? "Have I chosen you twelve? One of you is a devil." Easy to deceive the Christians, isn't it? It's all too easy to pass for a child of God. It's all too easy to be accepted by a group of believers, to be a member of a local church. It's all too easy to take active part in the services, even to hold office, to be baptized, to sit at the Lord's table, and to be like Judas, never truly born again. Would you young folk not agree with me when I say this morning, it's so easy to deceive, especially when you've been brought up in a godly home, in a Christian home? Oh, is it not easy to speak the language? Is it not easy to know the cliches of the Christian life? Is it not easy to sit at the Lord's table? Is it not easy to pass yourself in the local church as a true Christian, and yet you have never really been saved by the grace of God? My friend, this morning listen, you may deceive the Christians, you may deceive the pastor, you may deceive the elders, you may deceive the leadership of any local church but you'll never deceive the Lord for he can see right through you. The eyes of the Lord are upon us and all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

There was that outward show, deception. Deceptive in his witness. Deceptive in his work. Deceptive in his worship. But notice secondly and very quickly this inward slide, degeneration. You know, when Leonardo da Vinci was painting his masterpiece, "The Last Supper," he sought for a model to stand for Christ. At last, he located a chorister in one of the churches in Rome, a young man who had lovely features, a young man who was beautiful to look upon, and this young man's name was Pietro Bandinelli. And after years, when he had all the disciples painted on his painting, he was looking for someone who would reflect the face of Judas Iscariot. At last he found a beggar on the streets of Rome with a face that was so villainous and harsh that every time he looked at this man's

face, he shuddered. He hired him and here was a man who sat as Leonardo da Vinci painted his masterpiece, "The Last Supper," and when he was about to dismiss this man, he said, "Don't you remember me?" Pointing to the portrait of Christ, he said, "I sat for your model of Jesus Christ. I am Pietro Bandinelli."

Do you ever think of what Judas could have become? I mean, like the faithful eleven, he could have gone out in faithful service, he could have gone out in sacrificial service, he could have gone out in noble martyrdom, he could have gone out with rewards and glory, Judas could have been remembered as a great missionary or preacher of the cross, but instead he ends up a traitor. Someone has said this, "Collapse in the Christian life is rarely a blowout, it's usually a slow leak."

Now Judas was not a believer, but I want you to see there was a progressive slide in his life. In the city, there was disillusionment. Let me take you to four places where Judas is seen. In the city there was disillusionment. You see, when Judas lived, it was a time of heightened messianic hope. The Jews were looking for the overthrow of Rome. Here was a Jew who was an ardent, zealous patriot. He hoped that Jesus Christ had come to kick Rome out of his country. He expected to share in the glory and power of this new kingdom. And when Judas saw the Lord Jesus coming into the city of Jerusalem, and the people crying, "Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord," he said to himself, "That's it. It's going to come, it's going to happen today. Jesus Christ is going to oust Rome and set up the kingdom." But instead of ushering in the kingdom, the Lord Jesus spoke about his death and I can just hear Judas saying, "What's he talking about? What's he mean?" It was the last straw for Judas and so he sold his soul to the devil.

In the city there was disillusionment. Look at that chapter that you've opened in John 12. In the home there was resentment for here is Mary, and she's taking this alabaster box of ointment, and she's pouring out its contents on the person of the Lord Jesus. Mary seems to be saying, "Lord, I love you!" And Judas complains. There's resentment. Look at verse 6, then he said, "not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." Judas had not become a thief at this point, he had always been one. He'd been always stealing from the bag and the apostles were with him three years and they knew nothing about it. My dear friends, Judas was controlled by the power of covetousness. He wanted money. He wanted more.

An unusual ad appeared in England in 1836 offering a prize of 100 guineas to the author of the best essay on the sin of covetousness. The ad went like this, "Many of the wisest and best men are of the opinion that there is no sin so prevalent among professors of the gospel as the love of money and yet there is no subject on which so little has been written well." The essay that won the competition was entitled "Covetousness, the Sin of the Christian Church." You know what it is to covet? Of course you know what it is. You look at your neighbor's car and you want it. You look at your neighbor's house and you want it. You look at your neighbor's holidays and you want it. You know what I'm talking about. Of course you do. It's this spirit within us that's keeping up with the Joneses. And of course this was Judas' Achilles heel. It was his love for things. All this passion, this

love for money dominated his soul. It was the master sin in his life. My friend, what's the master sin in your life? You're here this morning, perhaps, and you're not saved, and what is it that's keeping you from the Savior? What is it that has the mastery, the power over you? It may be the love of money, it may be covetousness, it may be drink, it may be booze, it may be some sexual sin, it may be something that you did a year ago, but there's something in your life this morning that has the power, the mastery, the sovereignty over you.

I want you to see Judas. In the city, there's disillusionment. Christ is not the one who's going to throw out Rome, at least not at this time. In the city there's disillusionment. In the home there's resentment. In the Upper Room there's an announcement. Look at John 13. Flick over a page to John chapter 13. Remember by this time Judas had already negotiated the betrayal and here he is in the Upper Room with the rest of the disciples and he's playing the role of the hypocrite to its fullest extent. You remember the Lord Jesus washes the disciples' feet including Judas, and then he begins to expose Judas. Look at verse 10, John 13:10, "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all." Can you see what the Lord's doing? He's identifying the person of his betrayal, "You're all clean but not all." Can you see the person of this betrayal?

And then look at verse 18, can you see the prophecy of his betrayal? "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." Christ was saying that Judas' act of betrayal was a fulfillment of Psalm 41 verse 9. You see, in Judas Iscariot the prophetic word was fulfilled.

I want you to see the person of his betrayal, the prophecy of his betrayal. Look at verse 21. I want you to see the pain of his betrayal. "When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." Christ was troubled. He was troubled at Judas' ingratitude. He was troubled because of the kindness he had shown to Judas. He was troubled because of the hate that Judas harbored in his heart against Christ. He was troubled because of the repulsiveness of the presence of Satan. He was troubled because of the horrors of knowing that the gaping jaws of hell were awaiting one of Christ's closest companions. And all of this troubled the Savior.

Look at the stages of this man's deterioration. In the city, disillusionment. He's disillusioned. He thought the coming Christ would kick out the Roman government. In the city, there's disillusionment. My dear friends, in the home, in the home of Simon the leper, there is resentment. In the Upper Room, there's an announcement. In the garden, there is estrangement. Turn over to chapter 18 very quickly. Look at chapter 18. "When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron," some of you have gone over that brook, "where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples." He's coming now for the Savior. He's coming with a detachment of soldiers, a Roman cohort, probably 600 soldiers crossing the Kidron

Valley, going into the garden of Gethsemane. And the Savior didn't wait for Judas to single out, but nonetheless, Judas executed the act of betrayal with a kiss. Think of it. Judas Iscariot betrayed the Son of the living God for what? For exactly what Zechariah had prophesied, 30 pieces of silver, 10 quid, just the price of a slave.

I wonder this morning, what are you willing to trade Christ off for? How much is the Lord Jesus worth to you? He came to save you. He died to save you. He shed his blood to save you. But you're willing to sell him. You're willing to sell him for a friendship. You're willing to sell him for a farm. You're willing to sell him for the love of money. You're willing to sell him for the love of popularity. I wonder this morning is there a potential Judas sitting in this place, you're on the very verge of deciding for Satan instead of Christ, you're on the very verge of deciding for the material instead of the eternal. It may not be for silver, it may not be for gold, but still by tens of thousands is this precious Savior sold. Sold for a godless friendship. Sold for a selfish aim/ Sold for a fleeting trifle. Sold for an empty name. Sold in the mart of science. Sold in the seat of power. Sold in the shrine of fortune. Sold in pleasure's power. Sold with the awful bargain none but God's eye can see. Ponder my soul the question, will he be sold by thee?

Can you see the outward show, deception? Can you see the inward slide, degeneration? Look for a moment finally at the downward step, destruction. For Judas now, it was downward all the way. Physically it was downward. Some of us have been to the Upper Room in Jerusalem and you remember we had to climb the stairs to get into that Upper Room. Physically it's downward. It's down from the Upper Room to where his body would be smashed in pieces in the gully. Spiritually it's downward. It's downward from the presence of the Savior to the portion of the lost. Eternally it's downward, downward from grace to gloom.

You know what Christ said of Judas? "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Good for that man if he had not been born." Do you know what Peter said of Judas? "He went to his own place." You say, "Where did he go to?" To hell. He went to an eternal hell. Think of it. Eternally lost in spite of the privileges of his calling for we do know that the Lord Jesus called him, and the fact that Jesus Christ called him indicates to me that he had the same potential as the rest of the disciples. Time and time again in the gospels, he's referred to as Judas, one of the twelve. What a privilege. Think of what it must have been to to live with the Lord Jesus Christ, to walk where the Son of God walked, to sleep under the stars with the Master. What a privilege it was to live with the Lord Jesus, to listen to the Lord Jesus. Judas heard the Savior's words, Judas heard the Savior's warnings, "Have I not chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil?" Judas heard it, and like some of you, he ignored it. Over and over again, the Lord Jesus gave him an opportunity to repent. When the Savior announced that one in the Upper Room would betray him, Judas brazenly said like the other disciples, "Is it I? Is it I? Is it I?" Without a blush of the cheek, without a bat of the eye, and the thirty pieces of silver were burning in his pocket. And even in Gethsemane, the Savior said, "Friend, friend, wherefore art thou come?" Even then he could have flung himself at the feet of Jesus Christ and confessed his sin in hypocrisy, but he failed to do so and is eternally lost. Listen to me this morning. Judas is the greatest example of wasted privilege. He wanted money. He wanted



possessions. He wanted riches. He could have Christ forever, but he sold his soul for a pittance. What about your privileges this morning? The privilege of being brought up in Ulster? The privilege of hearing the gospel. The privilege of hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus. The privilege of hearing about the Savior's wounds, about the Savior's work, about the Savior's warnings. Could it be, my dear friends, this morning that like Judas, you've said no to the Savior's offer and you've said yes to something that will burn in the end along with this earth?

He went to his own place, eternally lost in spite of the privileges of his calling, eternally lost in spite of the problems of his conscience. Oh, his conscience is stirred, it has suddenly come alive and so wrapping his cloak about him he makes that journey through the streets of Jerusalem and he enters the temple and he opens his purse and he takes those thirty pieces of silver and he throws them down on the marble floor of the temple and he cries in remorse, "I have sinned! I have betrayed innocent blood!" My friend, can you hear those silver pieces as they hit the temple floor? Every one of them goes ringing, "Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!" And he moves from the temple and he goes to that field of blood and the flames of hell are already hissing and leaping around him and every flame of hell is hissing, "Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!" He puts the rope around his neck and he ties it to a tree and the branch of the tree snaps and he falls to his death in the gully below and the rope is swinging in the wind, "Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!" Seized with remorse, his conscience was pricked but he never repented unto salvation. I want to tell you this morning that outward remorse is not inward repentance. There's a great deal, you know, of difference between repentance and remorse. Judas took his sin to the wrong people and to the wrong place. He should have wept his way to that skull-shaped hill called Calvary outside the city wall. He should have flung himself at the feet of the crucified Lord Jesus. But Judas didn't do that. He went and hanged himself.

I wonder this morning, am I speaking to someone like Judas? You've had pangs of remorse, pangs of remorse for the things that you have done, pangs of remorse for sins committed, but you have never come right through to genuine repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and you're saying to me this morning, "Preacher, I've shed tears. Preacher, I've made resolutions. Preacher, I've experienced emotions." Have you ever truly repented? Have you ever truly turned from your sin? Have you ever made a clean break with sin? Judas didn't. He was one of the twelve. He was eternally lost.

My friends, I hear a voice from hell this morning. It's the voice of the Iscariot, "I was one of the twelve! I heard the messages! I saw the miracles! I saw people saved! I was so close to Jesus Christ but now I am eternally lost!" Can I ask you in closing, is the love of money ruling your life? Will you remember Judas and beware? I wonder, are you trifling with some particular sin this morning? I don't care what it is. It could be a sexual sin, it could be a financial sin, but you're trifling with some sin and you're flattering yourself that by and by you'll repent. Remember Judas and beware. Remember, you're here this morning, you're a member of this church, that church, or the other church. and you're just playing the part of the hypocrite, you're just going through the motions, but you've never truly been born again. Remember Judas and beware.

Let's pray.

*Father, we thank you for the challenge of your word to our hearts this morning. It's so easy to deceive the saints. It's so easy to deceive the church. It's so easy to deceive ourselves. Lord, would you enable us this morning, those of us who profess our faith, profess faith in thee, would you enable us just to go round the foundations afresh, just to make our calling and election sure, just to ensure that a real work of grace has been wrought in these hearts and lives of ours? And Father, I pray for any in the meeting this morning and they have never professed faith in the Lord, and there is some sin that has the mastery over them today. I pray, O God, that you would give them the grace to stop trifling with that sin, and today they might seek the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near. Bless your word to all of our hearts. May we hear this as a warning from heaven. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.*

I'm going to turn to our hymn books to 318, "Search me, O God, and know my heart today. Try me, O Lord, and know my thoughts, I pray. See, if there be some wicked way in me, cleanse me from every sin and set me free." If you're not staying for the Lord's table, I'd ask you to leave quietly on the third verse.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart today;  
Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray.  
See if there be some wicked way in me;  
Cleanse me from ev'ry sin and set me free.

I praise thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin;  
Fulfill thy Word, and make me pure within.  
Fill me with fire where once I burned with shame;  
Grant my desire to magnify thy name.

Lord, take my life and make it wholly thine;  
Fill my poor heart with thy great love divine.  
Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride;  
I now surrender; Lord, in me abide.

O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee;  
Send a revival, start the work in me;  
Thy Word declares Thou wilt supply our need;  
For blessings now, O Lord, I humbly plead."