

# The First Lord's Supper

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Go to Luke. Let's continue our work through the Gospel of Luke. I preached in a conference in Memphis last night or just south of Memphis, and I just referred to the fact that I was preaching through the Gospel of Luke and I'd been in there 4+ years or maybe 5 years and they all started laughing and I thought, "Well, is that abnormal? Is that unusual?" How do you preach this stuff and just zip through it?

Jesus is in the last week of his life, indeed, the last day or so of his life, and he's coming into Jerusalem to partake of the final Passover because the final Passover was transformed into the first Lord's Supper. Luke 22, beginning in verse 7 and going down through verse 23,

7 Then came the first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8 And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it." 9 They said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare it?" 10 And He said to them, "When you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters. 11 And you shall say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" 12 And he will show you a large, furnished upper room; prepare it there." 13 And they left and found everything just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover. 14 When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. 15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." 19 And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. 21 But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. 22 For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe

to that man by whom He is betrayed!" 23 And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing.

"The First Lord's Supper" is what I've entitled this exposition. Brother Tom, if you would, keep the outline up pretty much the whole time. I. We'll see a sovereign or the sovereign preparation. None of this is happening by chance. All of this was prescribed and ordained by God the Father.

Two sub points here, notice, first of all, the season. This was a sovereignly prepared season. You see, for 1,500 years the Jews annually celebrated the Passover followed by the week or the feast of unleavened bread. First, let's talk about the feast of unleavened bread. It simply was a memorial whereby they looked back on their deliverance from bondage in Egypt. They left in haste and in haste they had no time to gather things together including leaven so every year they they would have the unleavened bread for a week to remind them, "We were delivered so quickly we had no time to take even leaven with us." But spiritually there's a different meaning here. Leaven represents evil. Leaven represents the power of man, the strength of man. It represents the arm of the flesh and God wanted to remind them that, "You by your strength and your power did not deliver yourselves out of Egyptian bondage. I brought you out by my strong arm. No leaven was involved in your deliverance."

So every week they would have a week of eating that unleavened bread, but also it began with the Passover. The houses had to be purged of all leaven on the Passover day and then the Passover lamb was sacrificed. You know that the Passover every year the Jews would partake of was a memorial. It was to remind them of that final plague in Egypt before they were released when God sent the death angel to every household in Egypt and the death angel would take the life of the firstborn in every house except for the Jewish households where they had slain a spotless lamb and taken a hyssop branch and applied the blood to the doorpost and to the lintel and every house where the blood was applied, the death angel passed over and did not visit that household. 1,500 years now, year after year, and millions of little Passover lambs had been sacrificed on this Passover day and each one of them pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the one and only true Passover Lamb. In God's sovereign decree, Jesus, God's only Son, elected before the foundation of the world to be the sacrifice for man's sin and he was specifically set apart for this particular Passover feast on this particular day at this particular time, all pre-orchestrated by the sovereign plan of God.

Note the emphasis Jesus puts on things being done at the appointed time in the following verses: in Mark 1:15, he says, "the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand." Jesus was on a divine timetable. In John 7:8, he's in John's account of this very event, he says, "Go up to the feast yourselves. I do not go up to this feast because my time has not yet come." He knew if he went there would a lot of pressure and force to become King or to become the Messiah in their terms or definitions of what the Messiah ought to be and he said, "No, it's not time for me to go to Jerusalem and present myself as the Savior." In Matthew's account in Matthew 26:18, he says, "My time is near. I am to eat the Passover

at your house with my disciples." You see, there was a time, though I don't know any other word to use because there wasn't time, there was a time when there wasn't time. There was only God. It was an eternal state and then God in his infinite wisdom and power created time and space history out of nothing and at that moment when God spoke, time began and from that first second, there was ordained everything that would take place on planet earth and from that first second of time, this moment was ordained of God that God the Son, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, would go to Jerusalem, would go to a particular furnished prepared upper room, would recline with his disciples, would share in the Pascal lamb and in the Passover meal and be presenting himself as God's Passover Lamb for the sins of the world. This whole season was sovereignly prepared.

But also, not only the season, notice the setting is sovereignly prepared. In verse 7 we see that the Passover lamb the text said, had to be sacrificed. I'm sorry. Let me continue with the season for just a moment. I'll get to the setting in a moment. It had to be sacrificed. I want to talk about that for just a moment. First of all, we know it was a statute, of course, of Jewish law that you had to as a family gather together and bring your lamb and sacrifice it on this day every year, but far more importantly, of course, the Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, had to be sacrificed. If God is going to have for himself a people, if God is going to display the glory of mercy and grace and love through the merits of his Son dying for the unworthy, that's us, then there had to be a lamb sacrificed. If we are going to be forgiven of our sins, if there's going to be a purified and glorified church that will be with God for all eternity in the kingdom in the eternal state, then there had to be, there must be a sacrificial lamb.

Brothers and sisters, never be tempted or duped in believing that the event of Christ coming into Jerusalem, being nailed to a cross and dying on the cross is somehow just allegory or some type of symbolism for man to learn how to be unselfish and do good for others at the cost of himself. That's not what this was. He died vicariously in our place, taking our sin and our burden on the cross. It must be an actual historical literal event or we are still lost in our sins. The text says the lamb had to be sacrificed.

So now we come to the second sub point, B., not only was this the season for that to take place, foreordained, established from the foundation of the world, but the setting was sovereignly prepared also. Look at verse 8, if you will, it says that Jesus dispatches Peter and John, tells them to go on beforehand that they might prepare the place. Verse 9, "They said to Him, 'Where do You want us to prepare it?'" Verse 10, "He said, 'When you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters.'" So they have very specific details because God has gone before to prepare all of this.

In verse 11, "And you shall say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, 'Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'''" So they were to look for a specific man, they were to go into that specific man's specific house, and there's to be a guestroom specifically in that house for this particular Passover meal. On the one hand, it was common for the Jews who lived in the environs of Jerusalem to

allow pilgrims to come in and use a room in their house. On the other hand, you can't read the specifics of this without knowing God had preordained every part of it.

So we see that this man, look at verse 12, it says, "And he will show you a large, furnished upper room; prepare it there." So on the site of the man that Peter and John find in the city and approach, you have to understand that he understood this was for the Messiah. This was for, the word used here is "teacher." He knew this was the Savior. He recognized this was for the Savior. He had prepared a room for it. He had furnished the room, the Bible says. Now, in furnishing the room, it meant that he had laid rugs and soft linens around on the floor so it was prepared for everything. I think there's a deeper spiritual meaning here, Jesus will enter this particular house, he will go to this particular furnished upper room to share in the Passover with his disciples, but in the future, he will invite himself into the hearts of men to whom the Spirit has prepared and furnished a place for him. So we see the sovereign preparation, this season, this moment in time established from the foundation of the world that Christ would go to Jerusalem and become the Passover Lamb for all his children. The setting itself, every detail sovereignly prepared by God himself.

II. Not only the sovereign preparation but let's note the sacred transformation. The sacred transformation. In verses 14 through 20 we have here our Lord taking the Jewish Passover and therein creating the Lord's Supper. If you will, the Passover observance is going to be born again and become the Lord's Table that we share in regularly here. There's a real parallel here. Just as the Lord when he was born of a Jewish household and on the eighth day after his birth he is circumcised as a male child which is the sign of the covenant of being a part of the lineage of Abraham and being one of "God's children," however when the Lord entered circumcision, he fulfilled the ritual. He was the antitype. Circumcision was a type of coming into God's family but Jesus is the reality of how you get into God's family so he completes, if you will, the Old Testament rite of circumcision by him coming in and being the agent by which men are circumcised in their hearts and truly become the children of God because physical circumcision of an eight day old Jewish baby never made any baby a child of God. It was a symbol of which Christ is the fulfillment.

And now he takes the Passover and in the same way, he's going to fulfill the Passover. Every year the Passover represented Jesus Christ. Every year the Passover pictured a lamb slain for the sins of the people that God's wrath might pass over them. Well, all of those lambs pointed to Christ so here he comes to, if you will, fulfill and fill full the meaning of the Passover and now all the rites and all the rituals: circumcision, the Passover observance and all of the others of the Old Testament dispensation, all the feasts and the ceremonies are now fully fulfilled in Jesus Christ and in the writer of Hebrew's words, they are now become obsolete. And for a little note of application here, as we look at movements today and denominations even today that would teach some sort of New Testament works salvation as if there's an Old Testament law, that's passed away, now there's a new section of works, well, I want to tell you something, friend, Jesus Christ in fulfilling all the obligations of the law of God against sinners has fulfilled it all and made it all now obsolete. The entrance to God is now by faith in Christ, not a new set of works.

If you add a new works on, we're just as lost and doomed and helpless as the Jews were before.

Well, notice, first of all under this sacred transformation, it's going to be transformed from a lamb to the Lamb. The Jews were to take a lamb and sacrifice it, but from now on Jesus says, "That's not necessary. The emphasis is now on me, the Lamb." Verse 19 of our text, "when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.'" So here he elevates the Passover bread to new and higher meaning. It now represents his body, his holy sinless body, and from now on the supper will memorialize not the deliverance of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, but the deliverance of all true believers from the death angel and from sin's bondage and from sin's death. And further, the emphasis here is that the body of Christ is our bread. He comes to us in the person of the Holy Spirit imparting spiritual nourishment, imparting true spiritual life, both spiritual life that comes in new and sustains us until the day of glorification. A few cross references here. John 6:35, Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me will not hunger and he who believes in Me will never thirst." John 6:41, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven. I am the sustenance. No longer do you look to the old Passover bread commemorating deliverance from Egypt, now you look to Me. I am the one who provides the spiritual life that all dead sinners so desperately need."

The Bible says in verse 19, "He took the bread and he broke it." I think this refers to his body that was broken by sin and the vicarious judgment which meaning he took judgment in our place. He didn't take his judgment, he took our judgment on himself and in that judgment falling there was a brokenness. Now as a point of application, let's remind ourselves that we do not follow the superstitious ritual of some. The Roman church would tell us that you've got to go to the Roman church; you've got to go to the Roman Catholic priest; you've got to come down to that priest and participate in the Mass; you have to participate in the juice being administered by the priest and the wafer being given by the priest because in that moment, in that ritual, Christ dies for you again; and in that ritual, grace and cleansing comes into you again; and in holding that kind of doctrine, they keep men enslaved to the church because if you can't get to them and to their ritual, you don't get the death of Christ for yourself. Do you see how damaging and damning that is and what a power and a control the Roman church can cast over people if they can get them to believe that superstition? That's called transubstantiation, that the wine literally becomes his blood and the body literally becomes the body of Christ again, and you take of it through the priest in the church. We reject that categorically. The weight in that teaching is on the observance of the ritual, listen to me, and not on the regeneration of the heart. Did you get that? The emphasis there is on the observance of a motion in a building, not on the reality of a changed heart by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We partake of the supper because God has changed us by the power of the Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel, not in order to help merit or gain grace from God and a sacrifice for our sins. That's why Hebrews says he was sacrificed, listen, once for all. Once. Isn't that good news? Once for all. Aren't you glad you don't sit at home and have that lingering anxiety of wondering, "Have I gone to church enough? Have I gone to the

priest enough? Have I gone to the cleansing of the transubstantiation element of the Mass so that I'm cleansed sufficiently to not have to spend very long in purgatory?" What a hellish bondage. And by the way, friend, I know we live in a new ecumenical age when we're supposed to be just on hunky-dory good terms with everybody. Now look, I love my Roman Catholic friends. I have Roman Catholic friends that I believe know Christ but the dogma of their church is hellish. It always has been and it always will be, and our Baptist forefathers died by the thousands rather than submit to the state church's ordinance of these sacraments, and if our forefathers were willing to die for the truth that it might be preserved for us and for our children, bless God, we ought to at least be willing to preach it and live for the truth.

Jesus says, "Don't look to the ritual of the old Passover meal, look now to me. I am the Lamb sacrificed once and for all for the sins of the world. Do this," he says, "in remembrance of me. I am your Passover Lamb." Ephesians 5:2, "and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma." Everything in New Testament teaching cast the emphasis back on the finished work of Christ on the cross. There is no more work of Christ's saving power that needs to be performed by any priest, by any ritual, by any sacrament in any building anywhere. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ along to the glory of God alone.

So he took the bread and he broke it because his whole life was a giving; his whole life was a breaking which was culminated in the breaking of his body under the wrath of God on the cross for our sins. And he says it very simply here, he says, "From now on when you take this meal, do it in remembrance of me." Just a simple, sublime memorial of Christ. So we will take the supper together when we take it together as his church, not to sacrifice Christ, listen, not to sacrifice him again, not in a Romanish superstitious ritual, but to commemorate the one sacrifice he made for sin for all time.

Now, verse 20, he said there's a new covenant in my blood. "And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'" The Mosaic covenant at Sinai was ratified by the blood of an animal, but the Scripture teaches the real covenant God has with man is through the newer blood and the better blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have come into God and entered into his kingdom through a new and better way. So this sacred transformation begins by him pointing out that no longer will you remember a lamb, but you remember the Lamb, me, my body and my blood sacrificed for you.

Now, we continue on, B., he says from now on this is transformed from just emphasizing a past deliverance to emphasizing a present experience. The Jews would take this memorial every year and unfortunately in Jewish understanding they would just keep looking back and looking back and looking back, "Look what God did way back there for our forefathers," and that's a wonderful thing and there's good in looking back to an historical deliverance but they had missed the ever living reality of knowing God in your life through forgiveness of sins and through the merits of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The point is now we are in Christ. It's not just something he did and not something we'll

know one day, it's right now. He's alive in us and we are alive in him. Unlike the Passover that just pointed back to that historical deliverance, the new covenant by faith is a present perpetual reality. "This is my body," as he took the bread. "This is my blood," as he took the cup. In other words, "It's present with you now." So when we take the Lord's Table together today, we worship him as a present reality in our lives. We do remember the past memorial of him dying for us, that had to take place, but we enjoy the present reality but also we take that meal knowing that there's going to be a future reality also when we will finally be purged of worldliness and fleshliness; the old unredeemed humanity that I carry around now will be burned away and I'll have a new glorified body with him forever in heaven. So when we take the supper, we remember back to what he did for us, we joy in the present reality that he lives in us, and we look forward to the day we'll be with him forever in perfection and glorified and share in that cup forever and ever and forever with him.

Hebrews 10:20-22 says we come by, "a new and living way." Notice that phrase, it's living, it's present, it's alive. "Which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest," that's Jesus, "over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." Cleansing and forgiveness is not something we hope might be granted to us when we get to heaven and hope that maybe enough Masses were taken or purgings or purifyings were participated in that we will not spend very long in some place called purgatory. No! We take the supper glorying in the once for all finished work of Christ. Cleansing and forgiveness is ours now and our joy and our glorying in this should magnify progressively until we are with him in the day of glorification.

So truly the supper has changed for us. It's changed from a lamb to the Lamb. It's changed from just emphasizing a past deliverance or victory to a present reality and then thirdly, C. it's been transformed from an historic victory to a future victorious kingdom. Jesus said in verse 15 of our text that he earnestly desired, he earnestly desired to take this supper before he sacrifices. That statement emphasizes that he's come to the climactic point in his work of redemption. From eternity past he was fully committed to this moment in time when he would yield himself to die for his children. In eternity past, the Father sent his infinite love and affection on his own and the Father unleashed the full force of the Godhead to accomplish their redemption. Redemption's work is centered in the Son of God dying for the children that they might be saved and now Jesus said that time has come. I mean, really there ought to be an hour of silent contemplation and joy just thinking that Jesus is saying that moment has come. That moment of all moments is now upon us.

God the Father, who in wisdom ordained redemption's plan earnestly desired this moment. God the Spirit, whose power supports this plan, earnestly desired this moment. And God the Son whose actual literal death will accomplish this redemption, earnestly desired this moment. Why? Why did God the Father, God the Spirit, and the God the Son from eternity past look forward to this pinnacle point? This ultimate of all reference points in time and eternity? Because the grandest thing God has ever ordained to do is to

save for himself a people and he cast his heart and intention on them from the foundation of the world to work out their redemption which centers in this particular moment when Jesus would die as the substitutionary atonement for their sins. My friend, you are the apple of God's eye. You are the object of his glad joy and unfathomable love. That's why everything points to this moment. What a Savior. What a lover. What a God.

In verse 16 he says, "for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Jesus is saying that he knows there is going to be some separation and suffering between him and these particular disciples. His death is a separation but he's saying it's going to be a temporary separation and soon enough we will resume our feast together at the coming marriage supper of the Lamb. He said in verse 16, "until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God," therefore Jesus is giving this absolute assurance of a future reunion with his own in the coming eternal kingdom that he'll establish in the earth and we will be kept for that day by his mighty power. John 6:39, Jesus promises, "This is the will of Him," that's the Father, "who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day." "Pastor, do you believe in once saved, always saved?" I absolutely do because of all that the Father gives him, he loses nothing. I don't have any confidence in me as Art told us, I don't believe in once prayed, always saved because there are a whole lot of people that just go through the motions of praying and when they come down and pray with the pastor, they've done no more than a Catholic may do in his understanding, than coming down and taking the Mass with the priest. But have in your heart, have you experienced the weight of your sin and realizing you need a Savior and cast all of your hope and faith on Christ and Christ alone, have you see the evidence of new life in your heart, a new spiritual hunger, a new spiritual desire, a new burden about your sinfulness, a new joy that Christ paid it all? Has the evidence of the new birth registered in your soul? If that's so, then you're one of those whom the Father has given Jesus and of all that the Father gives Jesus, he loses not one. Loses nothing, but raises it up on the last day. Glory. Glory. Glory. Glory.

Revelation 21:1-5, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true.'" So the supper has been transformed from a past victory to a future victorious kingdom that we will inherit with him forever and ever and ever.

III. In this first Lord's Supper, there is a Satanic infiltration. A Satanic infiltration. Judas is at the supper. He has infiltrated the inner circle of Jesus Christ. He is an imposter. He is a hypocrite. He is a play actor as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two things come out in our text as we look at this. First of all, notice this is a grievous experience. Verse 21, Jesus says, "But behold," now he's taking this Passover meal, he is transforming the meal to be

pointed toward him from now on, not pointed back toward Egyptian or deliverance from Egypt, but he says, "Behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table." Psalm 41:9 prophesies of this event and when you look at this Psalm, you can't help but wonder or come to the conclusion, rather, there's no one else in no other time this could be pointed to but this very event. Jesus said, "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me."

Now, the Lord knew who Judas was from the beginning and the Lord invited him into the band of the 12 disciples, but it was a grief to his soul to have this devil play the hypocrite and be numbered among the inner circle. In John 13:21 John records that as Jesus reveals that there is one at the table who is going to betray me, that he is "troubled in spirit." He is grieved. It even emphasizes he was outwardly emotional. The Lord is probably there, he's told them he's going to suffer and die on the cross, he is the real Passover Lamb. All of that now has passed away. He's dipping in the bowl and Judas dips his hand in the bowl and tears must be coming off the face of our Savior knowing the reality of this one that was with him and so close is a traitor, a betrayer. Though we know the Scriptures foretell that imposters and false brethren will often be found even among the core fellowship of true churches, the discover and the removal of these false brethren is a grievous experience.

The Apostle Paul told the Ephesian elders that after he departs, after Paul leaves from them, that savage wolves would try to attack the church and he said they'll even come up from within your midst. Jude warns in Jude's little epistle that there will be those who get into the professing congregation of believers who are like hidden reefs in your love feast, they're not true believers. And as these in God's providence are exposed and removed, it is a grievous experience. The Bible says Jesus was troubled in his spirit about Judas and I want to tell you, it is a grievous experience for the church and the church's leaders and it does take a toll on your soul.

Secondly, not only do we see that this Satanic infiltrator, usurper, provides for a grief in the heart of Jesus, secondly, it's governed by providence. Providence prescribed every bit of this. Verse 22, Jesus says, "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined." Did you see that? The Son of Man is going because Judas wasn't discovered quick enough, wasn't exposed early enough and he's devised a scheme to destroy me? No, God has ordained this, "For indeed, the Son of Man is going just as it has been determined." That phrase "has been determined" can be translated "accurately defined or to mark off the border," in other words, God predetermined the exact things and the exact ways Judas could act in what he could and could not do. The Bible is teaching that God had ordained beforehand just how far Judas would be able to go and no further. Psalm 66:10 reminds us, "for the wrath of man shall praise You." Wrath of man shall praise you, wrong verse, but that's what the Bible tells us that even God's wrath has a way of bringing praise to God.

Divine providence does not allow any evil to be exercised which does not ultimately serve divine purposes. Did you hear that? Divine providence does not allow any evil to be exercised which does not ultimately serve divine purposes. Now listen to me: divine

purposes can always be categorized by two basic things: divine purposes always are pointed toward the glory of God and the good of his children. Are you hearing me? The glory of God and the good of his children. No matter what evil may be running rampant in our society today, it's so full of outward celebrating wanton vileness and evil, but I'm telling you, every speck of evil that exists will come to the conclusion of glorifying God and being good for his children which is exactly what's happening here.

But, now verse 22 continues, not only is the Lord going to be delivered up just as it has been determined but he says, "woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" Woe to that man by whom He is betrayed. In other words, Judas remains fully responsible and accountable for his evil betrayal of our Lord. Judas remains fully responsible and will give an account at the judgment bar of God. So here we see in this little snapshot the glorious balancing truths of Scripture of human depravity, the depth of evil that can lurk in the human heart and divine providence. Human depravity shown in the wickedness of Judas and you and I would humbly bow our heads with tears and say, "Lord, apart from your grace I could be a Judas. I could be a Judas." Human depravity and divine sovereignty.

When Jesus says woe to that one, I believe he's saying that there is no hope of grace at this point for Judas Iscariot. Matthew 26:24, "The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." The door of hope for Judas is eternally closed. Judas has resisted the truth. He had been with Jesus for three years, he had heard the truth over and over and over again, and the love of Christ right there before him only hardened his heart. Judas sold out Jesus but in reality he sold his own soul to hell.

Now look at verse 23. Jesus has said there is one dipping in the bowl that's going to betray me and what did the other disciples do? Verse 23, "And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing." Discussing among themselves. Matthew adds that they were sorrowful as they thought, "Which one of us would do this?" In humility and this is a good sign about the disciples, it shows some maturity and some spiritual wisdom. They began to suspect themselves and I can only assume that they had been reprovved and corrected rather, so many times by Christ in these three years they understand that they need to stop and first examine their own hearts. You remember the tax gatherer at the Wailing Wall who was saying, "O God, be merciful to me, the sinner! Be merciful to me, the sinner!" and Christ said, "That man went home righteous." Why? He looked at himself and saw he, himself, was wanting and capable of any sin. These disciples look at themselves and think, "Oh, am I the one? Am I the one?" That's why I tell you very often we need to pray the prayer, "O God, save me from me. Apart from your grace I could do anything. Save me from me." I think the disciples may have been praying that. You see, the spiritual man in this setting would ask, "Lord, is it I?" The carnal man in this setting would ask, "Lord, is it he?"

Judas, no doubt, in fiendish allegiance, played along and played humble like the other disciples. Judas with only a worldly heart came to the table with pride and ambition and he leaves the table full of Satan. He will betray the Lord, yet through Satan's ploy through

Judas, specifically Judas' betrayal of Christ, through that ploy, Christ will be delivered up and crucified and therein Christ will purchase his children's redemption and secure their eternity.

Let's bow in prayer.

*Father, we bow to thank you and praise you for these marvelous, marvelous truths that even the wicked evil of Judas resulted in our sins being cast on Jesus on the cross and our eternity being purchased by his shed blood. Father, help us to treasure him, to joy in him, to worship him, to adore him. And we thank you and we praise you on this Sunday morning that we do not have rituals to which we look to gain some sort of merit. We have a Savior who holds onto us and he has merited for us eternity and we praise you. We pray all of these things in Christ's name and for his sake. Amen.*