Carl Thrun

LUKE 22: 48

SECOND WEDNESDAY IN LENT:

Intro. Last week we saw how the bitter experience of proud, arrogant Peter taught him the distressful results of building upon himself and not upon the grace of God alone. We learned of the necessity of discovering our own depravity and impotence, of grounding our faith solely and only upon the sure rock of Christ, our Savior.

This evening we want to study our Lord's betrayer, Judas, and see if, perchance, we too don't have some of the qualifications of a Judas. Our human nature readily acknowledges the sins and shortcomings of others, but rarely does it admit our own faults. Therefore, let us take our egotistical pride and bury it far under the ground so that with all humility we can acknowledge our sins and look to God's abundant grace for help and deliverance. Jesus loves sinners who acknowledge themselves as sinners and come to Him for help.

I. Judas and Jesus were friends, even as you and I are friends of Jesus. Jesus had chosen Judas to be one of the twelve disciples. He was closely associated with Jesus during the course of His ministry. He was loved by Jesus. Even now in the garden when Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus still regards him as a friend. Matthew writes: "And Jesus said unto him: 'Friend, wherefore art thou come?'" How hard it must have struck Jesus to be betrayed by this, His friend. How deeply He must have been hurt.

II. Judas had a wonderful opportunity. Here was a man who had the privilege of sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to his Master's message. He was chosen to be an Apostle. He saw the wonders of the Lord. He was loved and instructed as were the other disciples. Having everything, as it were, handed to him on a silver platter, he still chose to betray the Lord. He had an opportunity to serve his Savior and failed.

III. You and I have a wonderful opportunity. We have God's precious Word. You too can sit a Jesus' feet and be instructed. In Church, in Bible classes, in private Bible readings, in family devotions you can learn what Jesus has to say to you; you can learn what His will is. Our Lord has called you too to serve Him. The church never has too many laborers. Consider how much time you have devoted to the service of your Lord. Deacons, elders, teachers, guildes are only a few of the opportunities you have to serve you Savior. How many sick people from our church have you visited? How many times have you witnessed to Christ?

IV. Perhaps we are too quick in condemning Judas. Don't we too have the same frailities, the same weaknesses? Are not we too inclined to seek after the almighty dollar at the expense of our Christianity. We are just as human as was Judas. Jesus said, "Our of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." These are human inclinations and we are human. We can expect anything that is evil to come from our corrupt hearts.

V. What kind of friends of Jesus are you and I? Are you loyal and faithful to Him always? Do you obey His will and commandments, or do you sometimes deliberately sin against His commandments? In a sense every sin committed deliberately by a FRIEND OF JESUS is a betrayal of our Lord. When you and I thus sin we are crucifying our precious Lord anew.

VI. Christ, the remedy. How may I rid myself of the sin of which I am guilty? The answer is: "In the blood of Christ." He is the one and only remedy for all sins. The Bible declares: "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Judas, too, could have been washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. God declares : "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." There are no exceptions!

Concl. No matter what your sin, no matter how grievous your transgression, you can receive the peace and comfort of the forgiving Savior. It makes no difference how long or how far you have strayed, and even though all was done deliberately, the Lord Jesus still loves you. He carried those sins too upon the cross. Never make the mistake of despairing as Judas did. God's promise is certain: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Ask God in Jesus name to be merciful to you, and He will have mercy and abundantly pardon.

JUST AS I AM AND WAITING NOT
TO RID MY SOUL OF ONE DARK BLOT,
TO THEE, WHOSE BLOOD CAN CLEANSE EACH SPOT,
O LAMB OF GOD, I COME, I COME.

A