

Matt 27.1-10

Clint Le Page

Main point – Learn from Judas' sin - remorse is not repentance

Samantha's Mum asked her to not take any biscuits, that were freshly baked and just taken from the oven.

3yo Samantha could see them and smell them, and she wanted one.

Her Mum left the room, and Samantha takes one(**SLIDE**) and quickly eats it.

But while she's still chewing, with a piece still in her hand, her Mum comes in, and catches her.

Samantha bursts into tears.-----

12yo **Tom** had his ipad taken off him for 2 days as a consequence, then his Dad catches him on his ipad, and Tom knows there'll be big consequences.

Tom starts to cry and says, "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean it".-----

Fred's wife catches him looking at pornography, and she feels upset, betrayed, n' leaves the room in shock. Fred feels deep regret, and shame, and says he's so sorry, he'll never do it again.

But 3 days later, he does.-----

In each of these cases the wrongdoer, the sinner, felt remorse.

They're sorry for the consequences of their sin.

But that's different from repentance, as we'll see today.

Remorse for sin, and repenting of sin are not the same.

And the difference matters, so I hope you'll keep listening.-----

We're looking at the last few chapters of Matthew's Gospel, and it's the lead up to Jesus' death on a cross.

Last week in Matthew 26 Jesus professed his Lordship, while Peter denied the Lord J.

Peter wept bitterly over his sin, and you heard from John 21, how Peter was forgiven and restored.

Just like we can be.

We can be forgiven and restored when we come to Jesus.-----

Peter repented.

But Judas Iscariot does not, as we'll now see.----

My first of three points today is,(SLIDE) The Response to Sin.

The response to sin needs to be repentance, not just remorse.-----

At some point Judas' devotion had turned to rejection and hate.

Judas' plan since ch26 v14 to betray Jesus for money, has now paid off.-----

Jesus has been arrested and awake all night, being interrogated and abused by the Jewish leaders, the Sanhedrin.

In **v65** they were convinced Jesus was claiming to be God, and guilty of blasphemy and so deserved death.

But the Jews had no legal authority to execute criminals.

So, in 27v1 they discuss and plot how to have him put to death.

And they know they need the Roman governor Pontius Pilate to order his execution.

So early on Good Friday morning they hand Jesus over to Pilate, and we'll look at that next week.

But for now, we're considering Judas' response.

It seems in **v3** that Judas had either been watching Jesus' trial from a distance, or saw him being taken away to Pilate, and knew Jesus was condemned as deserving death. And look at how he responds:

'Judas... was full of remorse and returned the 30 pieces of silver'.

Judas confesses that he's sinned and betrayed an innocent person, an innocent life.

So he admits his guilt and Jesus' innocence.

But the chief priests and elders reply with, 'What's that to us?'- "It's not our problem". Those spiritual leaders offer him no comfort or help, they just used him.-----

So Judas throws the money into the temple court, and goes away, and hangs himself.

Let's think about this.-----

Judas confesses to betraying an innocent person.

Deut 27 v25 actually says:

'The one who accepts a bribe to kill an innocent person is cursed.'-----

And remember Jesus had warned Judas in 26v23: "Woe to that man who betrays the SoM, it'd be better if he had not been born".

That is, if you go ahead and do this you will face God's just and terrible judgement.

But he did it anyway.-----

Yes, Judas felt remorse, he felt bad, and wished he could take it back.

He felt so sorry for contributing to the death of an innocent person that he went and committed suicide.

He was sorry for what he'd done.

The word for 'remorse' has a range of meanings, it can mean 'repent' in certain circumstances. But it can just speak of thinking or feeling differently, or regret.-----

And the context makes clear that regret and remorse is what it means here.

Remorse is feeling sorrow for the consequences of your sin, whether you suffer the consequences, or someone else does.

Just like when Samantha took the biscuit, or when, a brother tells their parent their younger sister broke the vase, when it was them.

Yes they feel sorry and bad that their sister suffered the consequence, but they didn't change their mind so as to turn away from the wrong.(**SLIDE**)-----

Remorse is feeling sorrow for the consequences.

Whereas repentance is feeling sorrow that you've sinned against a holy and loving God, and it involves a change of mind and direction.

Repentance is more than saying sorry or feeling sorry, it's turning back.

Turning back in your heart to God, trusting in the Saviour Jesus for forgiveness, and committing to obey God in the future.

Just like at Pentecost, the Jews heard the Gospel, were convicted of their sin, and said, 'What shall we do?'

And Peter said, Repent and be baptised, in the name of JC, for the forgiveness of your sins.---[Acts 2.37]

The **Westminster Shorter Catechism** asks(**SLIDE**)

Q: What is repentance unto life?

A: Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.-----

The word for 'betray' in v3-4 speaks of handing over, which Judas does, he hands Jesus over to the Jewish authorities.

But the word can also mean abandon, and that abandoning starts in the heart, whether for Judas then; or people today.

Judas abandoned and betrayed Jesus, and he truly regretted his choices and the consequences that came. So much so that he killed himself.

Whereas Peter last week responded to his denial and sin with repentance and faith.

And Peter was forgiven and restored. [John 21.15-19].

Judas did not turn back to God, or seek God's forgiveness.

But it's not too late **for us**.

As Neil said last week, your failure to keep your promise, your lying to save your own skin, your unkindness, or sexual impurity can be forgiven.

Your failure to love others or going with the crowd after you professed loyalty to Jesus, can be forgiven.

We just need to come to Jesus.-----

And from our passage today the message is we need come to Jesus in repentance and faith.

Be like Peter not like Judas.
As **2Cor 7v10** says(**SLIDE**)

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

How have you been responding to your sin?-----

Don't just feel bad for your sins, hate it, turn away from it.

Turn back to God by trusting in Jesus the Saviour.

Ask for God's forgiveness, then pray for strength and commit to living God's way.----

Maybe you've abandoned or your considering abandoning Jesus in your heart?

Maybe you've already given your heart and greatest love to someone or something else?-----

Maybe you're seeking and loving money more, pleasure more, your sin more; and you're coming to church cos it's what you do, or your parents make you?-----

Maybe you're a teenager and already abandoned Jesus in your heart, and once you finish school you're out of here.-----

Or maybe you know your commitment to Christ and his people is just a show?

And you're living lie?

If that is you, if any of these describe you, then repent!

Repent before it's too late.

Turn back to the God who made you and loves you.

Turn back to and trust the Saviour who gave his life to forgive and restore you.----

Turn back to experience God's welcome and eternal forgiveness not eternal death.---

Last week I was away in **Vietnam**, and with Andrew Harrison one of our elders, and I preached at a Vietnamese Evangelical church last Sunday.

The Church was part of a Christian addiction rehab centre, outside Hanoi.

We met pastor Trun who was a former drug addict.(**SLIDE**)

He gave me a book with testimonies about the lives of people who were saved and transformed by Christ, including his own.

He was now leading the church and rehab program.

It was so encouraging to see God's work in people's lives there.-----

Pham was one of them(**SLIDE**).

Some turned to drugs to escape the pain in their lives. Pham was pampered by a loving and supportive family, and after being encouraged to try drugs for fun he got hooked, addicted.

He fought with his parents he took their money, he stole their things, to sell them to buy drugs.

He says, 'day after day, my stomach churned and tears flowed from my eyes as I held the money my mother had given me'.-----

But it was only remorse, not repentance. He said I continued to inflict pain and suffering on my parents and family as I tried to satisfy my cravings.----

He was addicted for 16 yrs and dying of HIV, until he entered the Christian drug rehab program. Christians cared for him, shared the Gospel with him, prayed for him.

And Pham was saved, and physically healed.----- Praise God!-----

Remorse doesn't save, repentance and faith saves.

I hope you have turned from sin and relied on Jesus.-----

Next we see The Fulfilment.(SLIDE)

In **v6** the chief priests take the coins Judas had thrown into the temple.----

If they can't keep it cos it's blood money, I don't know how they justified paying Judas in the first place?-----

But they confer together, it's the same word for 'plotting' as in v1, and they buy the potter's field as a cemetery for foreigners.

Matthew then explains that the 30 silver pieces being used to buy the potter's field fulfilled words of the prophet Jeremiah.-----

Now we read from **Zech 11** earlier, (SLIDE) who spoke of how the Israelite leaders had failed as shepherds.

And God was going to shepherd them.

Zechariah acts this out, as a type, or prefiguring of the Messianic Shepherd King.

But God's shepherd is only paid 30 pieces of silver.

Which he is to throw to the potter, in the house of the Lord.-----

Jeremiah is the prophet who speaks of a potter's house. (SLIDE)

Jeremiah smashes a potter's jar to symbolise the death and destruction of Jerusalem.

(Jer 19.1-13; 26:6-10)

Then in Jer 32 Jeremiah goes and buys a field.-----

So to draw this together, Jeremiah who is a major prophet, who speaks of potters and buying a field, and Zech speaks of the 30 pieces of silver.

So Matthew mentions Jeremiah but includes the words of Zechariah too.

There's a combination of verses here.

But the point is, the prophecy is fulfilled.-----

Matthew's eye witness testimony says here is trustworthy.-----

As Augustine said, the New Testament is in the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed.-----

They're connected, and the Lord is in control of every detail.-----

But there's one more difficulty I wish to touch on.

Matt 27 says Judas threw the money into the temple and the priests used it to buy the Potter's field, as a place to bury foreigners.

But **Acts ch1** says, (SLIDE) Judas bought the field, then fell into it and died with his intestines spilling out.-----

How do we reconcile these?-----

Now there's not necessarily a contradiction.

It may be that the place where Judas hanged himself was that field, and his body was left hanging until it swelled and decayed, his body fell to the ground and his intestines spilled out.

And the field was bought with the money from Judas and got named Field of Blood.---

The focus of Matthew seems to be on how Judas chose to kill himself, and Luke and Peter in Acts focus on the final state of Judas' body.

But it can be helpful to see that Matthew may describe Judas this way because he wants Judas' death to be seen in the light of a particular OT backdrop.

In 2nd Samuel, David's son Absalom betrays his father the King, and seeks to kill him.

David flees for his life.

Absalom's death is unusual. While he's out on his mule, **2Samuel 18 says (SLIDE)**

His head got caught in the branches of a tree, and he was left hanging by his head.

He ends up being killed by soldiers, but he was left hanging.

Absalom can be said to have died a Judas-like death, and Judas an Absalom-like death.-----

Both David and Jesus are Kings, and both are betrayed by ones close to them.-----

Remember since Matthew ch1 Jesus has been declared to be the Son of David, the promised King. And just as David was betrayed by those close to him, so was Jesus.

David and Absalom are paralleled with Jesus and Judas.

Absalom was isolated and alone, hung from a tree by his own self-ambition, and so too Matthew does that with Judas.-----

So Matthew and Luke in Acts report Judas' death in different ways, but they likely have different reasons for saying what they do.

The tension in the details is not necessarily a contradiction.-----

We can have confidence in the text. We can trust God's word.

You can know that God's prophecies and promises will be fulfilled.-----

Final point is, The Response to Jesus. (SLIDE)

Coming back to **Matt 27v9**, 'they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him whose price was set by the Israelites, and gave them for the potter's field'.

The 30 silver coins was the 'price set by the Israelites'.

This refers back to **Zech 11**.(SLIDE)-----

A few weeks ago when we looked at Judas' betrayal we learnt that the 30 pieces of silver was the price you'd pay for a slave, and so it wasn't much money that Judas accepted to betray Jesus.

Jesus was betrayed for a pitiful and pathetic amount.

Zech 11 says that 30 pieces of silver was a 'magnificent price'.

That is sarcasm, for it's a pathetic amount.

In Zech it showed that the shepherd was rejected.

The Israelites valued the Shepherd as worthy of 30 pieces of silver.

Remember that might have been worth \$300.

So Judas didn't value Jesus.

The Israelite religious leaders didn't value Jesus.

The majority of Israelite people didn't value Jesus.

He wasn't worth a magnificent price, but a miserable price!-----

My question is, regarding our response, **Do you value Jesus?**-----

And if you do value Jesus how will it show?-----

For if we value Jesus and he's worth our lives, our allegiance, our hearts, our love;
it will show.

In the context of this passage **it will show in repentance**.-----

When we sin, and we're convicted of that, we will realise we've failed and rejected the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us, we will turn from sin back to him.

If we realise that we are honestly betraying Jesus by abandoning him in our hearts, turning away from the Saviour who loves us, and will face judgement, then repent.

Do you need to repent?-----

What sin do you need to repent of?-----

Please think again that Jesus is magnificent and worthy, of our hearts, our love, our devotion, our obedience.

And will you live for him?-----

Our values form the foundation of our lives. They dictate the choices we make, the direction our lives take, your decisions about relationships, career and everything.

Jesus had values, and we who trust and follow him, have been saved to be like him.

Jesus valued **life**, he came to give life, life to the full, life forever.-----

Judas and the Jewish priests were willing to take life.

We must not take the life of others.

We must be people who support life, and help others flourish in life.-----

Is that you?-----

Jesus valued **love** – love for God, and love for his neighbour, love for the lost.----

Jesus' love for God was seen in his prayers and persevering patient trust in trials.----

Is that being seen in you?--- It can be when you keep focused on his love for you.----

Christ was motivated by love, and truly loved others.

He lived and died, for love.

In Matthew 27 he is heading to the cross in love for sinners, to die for sinners, even us.-----

Love makes you a giver not a taker.

Love leads you to live for others not yourself only.-----

Don't wait to be assigned or asked. Assign yourself, take initiative.

Give yourself away every day, for Jesus loves you.-----

Is loving others what you truly value?-----

We saw last week that Jesus valued **truth**. He spoke the truth while Peter lied.-----

Are you someone who values and speaks the truth?-----

Do you speak the truth in love?

To your spouse, your children, your parents; your work colleagues, and to people online? – Truth spoken in love?

In teaching the truth to your children, if you have kids, will you teach them not just to fear the consequences of their sin, or “Say sorry”;

but will you teach them that there is a Lord they have sinned against, and before him they need to repent?-----

Jesus valued **relationships**.

Judas abandoned Jesus and his friends and died alone.

Do you value your relationship with God, with Jesus?-----

Do you value your relationships with others, including your church family?

Are you showing that in how to treat people, and how you love and serve people here?

Do you value Jesus and what matters to Jesus?-----

Money mattered to Judas, mattered more than Jesus and his relationships.

Then he regretted that and killed himself.

He was remorseful but not repentant.

When you're convicted if your sin don't just feel bad about it. Hate it and turn from it.

Turn back to God by trusting in Jesus, seeking the Spirit's help to live God's way and value Jesus above all.

He's worth it.

Let's pray.