



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | [believerschapeldallas.org](http://believerschapeldallas.org)

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Suffering Savior, Mark 14:12-25

"The Last Passover and the First Lord's Supper - I"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] ...our larger series and this one is entitled, "The Last Passover and the First Lord's Supper." So we are turning to Mark chapter 14, and I'm going to read verse 12 through verse 21. Mark chapter 14, verse 12 through verse 21.

"And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover. And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I? And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in

the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born."

This passage that we are looking at is usually called the last Passover, but I think the title, "The Last Passover and the First Lord's Supper," is a better title for obvious reasons. Because it is not only an account of the last Passover, the last valid Passover, but it is also an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper and thus the first Lord's Supper. Jesus Christ left the church two ordinances. And these are to be observed until he returns. One is the ordinance of water baptism. And by water baptism, we emphasize through our experience of it, the fact that we have entered the church of Jesus Christ. And so water baptism stresses the entrance of the believer into the church.

The Lord's Supper, on the other hand, stresses one's continuance in the church. For in the Lord's Supper we gather, and as we observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper we testify to the fact that our life comes from Jesus Christ and that we are united together with one another because of our union with him. The fact that we take the bread and take the wine suggests that our life is due to what he has done for us, but in the fact that we all do this, we show not only that we are united to him but that we are united to one another in that we have a common relationship to Jesus Christ.

One might think of a couple of questions at this point, and one of them might be, well, what is an ordinance? We often hear people speak of ordinances, but it is not too often that we have ordinances defined. What is an ordinance? Well let me just suggest to you not by dogmatism that an ordinance is a symbolic rite setting forth the primary facts of the Christian faith and universally obligatory among believers. It is a symbolic rite in the sense that for example, being baptized in water we signify spiritual truth. And that we also say that it sets forth the primary facts of the Christian faith, for through water baptism and through the Lord's Supper we show our relationship to the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is universally obligatory or these ordinances are universally obligatory

among believers because in the New Testament we are exhorted to be baptized by water and also, we are offered the opportunity of setting at the Lord's Table.

Or are ordinances for believers, one might ask? Why I think a simple reading of the New Testament would lead you immediately to conclude, yes, they are for believers because believers are exhorted to be baptized, and those who sit at the Lord's Table in the New Testament are pictured as believers. But I think also just from the stand point of reason, we would come to the conclusion that these ordinances must be for believers because they could not possibly be understood were one not a believer. If for example, you should have wondered into Believers Chapel last night at the time of the water baptism that took place, and you happen to look up on the platform or beyond the platform here at the baptistery and saw someone pushing someone else underwater, you might not think that this had anything to do with the preaching of the gospel at all. If you could not hear anything that was said, why you might just wonder what kind of strange goings on happen at Believers Chapel?

Or in the case of the Lord's Supper, if you had come earlier in the evening and had sat at the Lord's Table and you looked around and even asked the question, what are you doing here tonight? Well, we're breaking bread together. That was a common term for eating together in ancient times. And let's just suppose for the sake of the illustration that we are in ancient times and you say you are going to eat bread together tonight, break bread together. Yes. And so you come in and everybody sits very quietly and the bread is finally broken after a long pause, and you are in the meantime saying these people are apparently not very hungry, they waited about forty minutes before they eat with the food before them.

But then when they take out the bread and you discover that it is a very small loaf and nobody partakes of anything but just a little bit and as far as the wine is concerned, it is not even one glass for everybody. You would think well either they're on a very, very severe diet at Believers Chapel, but looking around in the audience, it doesn't appear to

me that they are on diets, all of them. [Laughter] So any way, you can see that it would be absolutely essential to be a believer to really understand what is going on here, or if not a believer, a person who has had some believer explain to them some of the fundamental facts of when an ordinance takes place.

So I think that we could say without a great deal of fear of contradiction that ordinances are for believers. The New Testament uses a number of terms for the Lord's Supper. For example, we have the term, communion, and this is a very common term that Christians today use. They say that we are going to observe communion when they are coming to the Lord's Supper. They use the term, the Lord's Table, for that is a biblical term. The Lord's Table; it is the Lord's Table because he is the host and we are the guests and it is well to remember that. And of course, we use that expression, the breaking of bread, which was also an expression used for sitting down at the meal or at the table with anyone. And the New Testament also speaks of the term, Eucharist. That means simply, thanksgiving. And because Eucharist means thanksgiving, it has come to be something of a term of common use among many professing Christians for the Lord's Table. In the Greek Orthodox Church, I believe that their term for the Lord's Supper is the Eucharist. It is quite common among Anglican churches to speak of the Lord's Supper as the observance of the Eucharist. At any rate, all these terms refer to the same event, the observance of the Lord's Supper.

It is very interesting in the New Testament to discover that the Lord's Supper is the only act of worship for which the Lord gave special direction. And of course, I speak of corporate worship. But it is the only act for which our Lord gave special direction. And furthermore, it apparently so far as we can tell, was the highlight of the corporate worship of the local church. It should, therefore, be of tremendous significance for us. You'll remember that when Paul came to Troas, Luke says, "On the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread." He does not say on the first day of the week they came together to hear a sermon. On the first day of the week, he does not say they

came together to have fellowship with one another. They did not come together to, and you can think of the many other things that we might do on Sunday, but they came together, apparently, with the primary intention of breaking bread; observing the Lord's Supper. This was of great significance for them. And it seems to me that in the New Testament we should give it a place of great significance in our Christian testimony. "On the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread."

The roots of the Lord's Supper go back to the Passover supper, and since this was a tremendously significant thing among the Israelites, the carryover of this into the Christian church is not surprising. So we have in the Christian church then, the highlighting of their corporate worship in the observance of the Lord's Table. I think it's also interesting that the term that is used for the Lord's Supper, is a term that refers to a very significant meal that ancient people had. As I've mentioned to a number of you, I grew up in Charleston, South Carolina and in Charleston customs are quite different from Texas.

For example, in Charleston, the Charlestonians get up in the morning, they have an ordinary breakfast at an ordinary time, perhaps a few minutes later than busy industrious Dallasites, but nevertheless, they get up and have an ordinary breakfast. Then they go down to their offices and then they work usually till about one or even one-thirty. They go home and they have a large meal in the middle of the day, but not at twelve o'clock; usually about one to one-thirty. Frequently, men who observe this kind of habit in their homes do not get back to their offices until three, some even three-thirty. That is the main meal of the day.

Now in the west I think it is probably true of most of us to say that we get up in the morning and we have an ordinary breakfast that is if we have a wife who gets up and cooks our breakfasts for us. I am very sorry for you men who don't have wives who get up and cook breakfast for you. It seems to me that the wife ought to be someone who has the breakfast on the table and who also goes out and gets the newspaper off of porch and brings it in and lays it open by the side of the table before she even disturbs you.

[Laughter] But now of course, I am only speaking about what takes place around my house, and so I don't know what may be the custom around yours. But nevertheless, that it seems to me is the way it ought to be.

Then in the middle of the day since you're busy working you get a lunch wherever you can and you come home at night and you expect to have a nice, important, significant meal at the end of the day, and that is your big meal. So your breakfast is an ordinary meal, you have lunch or a luncheon in the middle of the day, and you have dinner at night. Now in Charleston, it was breakfast, dinner, and then supper. Everybody can just get what they can in Charleston after that big meal in the middle of the day.

Now what I am leading up to is this, that the word used to describe the Lord's Supper is not a word that would suggest our noon meal, a luncheon. It's the word that would suggest the evening meal out here, or the meal in the middle of the day in Charleston. In other words, it's the Greek word that means dinner. And so if we had called the Lord's Supper the Lord's Dinner then we would have a better term to represent the significance which the Lord's Dinner had among the early Christians. So then this is a significant occasion when Jesus is going to observe the last valid Passover; for after he dies, all Passovers are invalid, and it is the time when he will institute for the first time, the Lord's Supper.

Well, let's look now at our passage from Mark chapter 14, and we're going to look at this for two nights, this Monday night and next Monday night. We're going to discover, I think, that there are three movements in this section. In the first movement, verses 12 through 16, we have the preparation for the Passover and then in verses 17 through 21, the celebration of the Passover. We will deal with those two movements tonight, and then finally, next Monday night the Lord willingly, we will deal with the institution of the Lord's Supper.

So tonight we are going to look at the preparation for the Passover and first of all the disciples question. It is now Friday of the week, our Lord's last week on the earth,

and they have asked our Lord, "Where will Thou that we go and prepare that Thou mayest eat the Passover." The arrangements have been made for the slaying of the lamb and so the disciples now want to know where they are going to eat the Passover. Jesus has already said with desire, "Have I desired to eat this Passover with you;" an expression of great desire to fellowship with them around the Passover supper. And so he sent forth two of his disciples and he said unto them, I want you to go into the city and you are going to meet there a man bearing a pitcher of water. And when you meet this man, I want you to follow him. And whenever he goes into a home, I want you to say to the good man of the house, where is the guest chamber, and this really means something like a guest room, where is the guest room where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And then our Lord says, and he will show you an upper room, a large upper room furnished and prepared there make ready for us.

One of the interesting things that is not so clearly brought out in our English text is the fact that they were to ask this man in the house where the man with the pitcher of water would enter, they are to ask him for a guest room, like a room in an inn. They're going to ask him for a room in which they may observe the Passover, but he in turn is not going to give them an ordinary room. For the term that is used for the room that he is to give them is a term that means the best room in the house. And so, they are to ask for an ordinary room and the man is to give them a room that will be something like the best room in the house. And we read, "And his disciples went forth and came into the city and found as he has said unto them and they made ready the Passover."

Now before we go on, I want you to notice one interesting thing about this little incident. It immediately makes you think of the incident that we looked at when we began our series of studies this winter. If you'll look back for a moment to chapter 11, verse 2 through verse 6, you'll remember the Lord gave the disciples some instructions about the animal upon which he was to ride when he came into the city of Jerusalem.

And I'm going to reread these verses beginning with verse 2 of chapter 11 through verse 6, and we read,

"And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never a man sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded:" (notice the word, had commanded) "and they let them go."

Now the striking thing about this is that here we have two incidents that are very similar, but there is one important distinction between them. In the case of the colt, our Lord demanded the animal upon which he should ride. In the case of the upper room, or the room, all he does is ask. Now in the fact that he demanded the colt and asked the upper room, we have something of the flavor of the significance of these two events. For remember, when Jesus came into the city of Jerusalem he was coming as a king. And he was coming to claim what was his own; the Messianic Kingdom.

And so it is right that a king should make requisition of an animal upon which to ride. But now since our Lord is going to the cross to suffer as the Lamb of God, as the Messiah now who must suffer before he shall be glorified he asks. So in the one we have a picture of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but in the other a picture of the Lamb of God. In the one we have a King who demands. In the other, we have a Mediator who is to die. In one he anticipates his glory; the glory of his Messianic Kingdom. In the other he acknowledges the fact that he must die in the passion of his blood.



Well the mission is accomplished, and we now turn to the celebration of the Passover itself. Here now our Lord is going to observe the last of the Passovers and institute ultimately the first of the Lord's Supper. We could say our Passover for Paul says, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. We could say our Passover goes to his Passover. Now in connection with the Passover supper let me remind you that there were about four parts of this ritual that are significant. In the first place as they sat down beside the table there was a preliminary course that they partook of. The bread was broken, and they partook of something similar to what we might say would be hors d'oeuvres. Then there was a little liturgy which the head of the house engaged in. It was the custom for the head of the house to explain the significance of the Passover account. So at this point with the whole family gathered around the man who was the head of the house, the host, he would engage in an exposition of Exodus chapter 12 and the other significant passages to explain to the family the significance of the rite that they were observing and the spiritual significance of that to which it pointed.

And if that were true, and so far as we can tell that was the custom, then I think of all the expositions of the Passover, this must have been the most unusual and probably and undoubtedly, the most accurate ever given. I would loved to have heard the Lord Jesus expound the significance of the Passover to his disciples, and that is probably what he did. They sat around and listened for he was the host and they were guests. Then after that they observed the main meal and they partook of the lamb. All the time they were drinking their wine. There were actually four cups in the meal. The third cup of the meal is probably to be identified with the cup which he takes and by which he institutes the Lord's Supper. And then at the end they sing the hymns of the great Hillels, Psalm 113 and through Psalm 118, and they go out.

The physical position of our Lord at the Lord's Table is of some significance. Now I know that you didn't realize that I could draw as I have drawn, so eat your heart out. You didn't know that I had all of these wonderful talents. [Laughter]. But most of us who

have traveled at all, we are inclined to think that Leonardo Da Vinci's, Lota Macaina is surely the way in which the disciples sat around the Lord's Table, and most of us picture a long table at which our Lord is sitting in the middle with the apostles arranged on both sides. Da Vinci, of course, had a very interesting looks on the faces of the apostles in his picture. But it probably does not have anything to do with reality. In ancient times, ordinarily, a long rectangular table, something like this, was set up in a room. It was about eighteen inches high. And instead of sitting at the table, they reclined, and usually we're reclined on their left side which would free their right side for partaking of things that were on the table.

Now since the place for the younger members of the family was at this part of the table. By the way, I haven't got it up there high enough for you, have I? Thank you Liz, I really thought you were looking at it till I saw the look on your face, and I just knew there must be something wrong when I saw the look on your face. But anyway, John would be located here. And our Lord, since this was the place of the host, he would be here. And Judas, who was the honored guest, would be here. And probably Peter was over here. The other disciples were arranged about the table.

Now the fact that this is probably the way in which the apostles were around the table enables us to understand some other things. For example, how could John alone hear the reference to the sign of the betrayal? Well, when the disciples asked around the table and when Judas asked and said, "Is it I, Master?" Our Lord, remember said, "Thou has said." But Peter did not hear it, and since our Lord is upon the breast of Judas, he can turn and speak to Judas and have Judas and perhaps John only hear what he said, whereas the others being farther away would not hear. I feel quite sure if I know Peter if he had heard our Lord say Judas, you are the one. Judas would not have left that table alive. [Laughter]

This can also explain why he handed the sop first to Judas, because Judas being the honored guest would be here. So our Lord handed it to Judas first because he was the

honored guest. It also can explain how Judas can ask to see if his treachery was known and no one would hear the answer as I just said. It can explain too, why Peter after his dispute with the apostles took this seat, for this is the lowest seat. And you'll remember before the Lord's Supper, they had had quite an argument about who should be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. And our Lord had finally said, well the man who is least is going to be greatest and the one who is greatest is going to be least. And so in anxiety to be the greatest, he immediately rushed and took the lowest seat at the table hoping that he might be promoted from that place to the place of greatness. It also can explain how Peter could beckon to John across the table to ask our Lord who it was who would betray him.

So it seems that since this is in accordance with the custom of ancient times and explains a lot of things in the New Testament, that this was probably the way in which they arranged themselves around the table.

Well we have our Lord's announcement of the betrayal now in verses 17 and 18. And we read in verse 17, "And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me." And here, of course, we have mention made of Judas. Judas is the supreme enigma of the New Testament. Apostle of Jesus Christ and yet at the same time he had a demon. He was a devil; an apostle of Jesus Christ and devil, at the same time. Surely a supreme; the supreme enigma. When I think of Judas my thoughts for myself go back to some messages that I gave many years ago on the radio here in Dallas. About twenty years ago, I use to come on the radio every Wednesday morning and teach in the Psalms. We called it, Musical Mornings in the Psalms. And that was not my title, but it was one that Dr. Carl Armerding had given and I took over the broadcast after Dr. Armerding had left Dallas, having been on the faculty of Dallas Seminary. And I remember beginning to expound the Psalms with Psalm 68. When I got to Psalm 69, I noticed a most unusual thing. In reading Psalm 69, I came to the section of the Psalms in which we have those

terrible words of imprecation. And I'm going to ask you if you will for a moment to turn back there for just a moment because this was the thing that started me, first of all, in my investigations of the significance of Judas, Apostle of Jesus Christ.

In Psalm 69 and verse 22, we read,

"Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded."

Now it's not necessary for me to read the rest of this, but what I want to point out is this. When I came to the exposition of this part of the Psalm, I realized that I was getting in just a little bit over my head in the exposition of the word of God. And so I began to look around for some way out of this difficulty in which I found myself. And I can remember on one Wednesday morning, I came on the radio and spoke about this and I said I noticed that this is quoted in the New Testament and it is applied to Judas. And I said, so next week I want to give you a message on Judas because I was not too sure I could expound this section, but I thought I knew something about Judas.

And so I turned over to the New Testament, and I am going to ask you to do the same thing if you will, to turn over with me to Acts chapter 1. I turned over the Acts chapter 1, and I read the section in which this section is quoted from the Old Testament, and I was startled again to see that not only was that passage in Psalm 69 referred to Judas, but there was another one as well. We read in verse 15 of Acts chapter 1,

"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now 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. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take."

Now it so happened that I looked at that and I saw that not only was Psalm 69 cited, but Psalm 109 was as well. So I turned over to Psalm 109, and I was amazed to discover that the language of Psalm 109 was even worse than the language of Psalm 69. So turn over there for just a moment to Psalm 109. This is an amazing Psalm. It begins with five verses in which David speaks about his adversaries. And you'll notice that he refers to his adversaries in the plural number. For example, verse 4, "For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love."

Now beginning at verse 6 and going through verse 19, David suddenly under the inspiration of the Spirit, begins to speak about an adversary in the singular. But then again with verse 20 he says, "Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord, and of them that speak evil against my soul." So he begins by speaking about his adversaries, and then suddenly he begins to speak about an adversary, in the singular. Then after speaking of him, he again moves into the plural and speaks of adversaries.

Well, now I want to read you some of the things that he says about this adversary, beginning with verse 6,

"Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow." (This is why people, why our modern theologians, our contemporary theologians tell us that the God of the Old Testament is not the God of the New Testament. For look at these prayers that David is uttering under the inspiration of the Spirit.) "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg; let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out."

And I needn't read it all. It is just like that. This is one of the great imprecatory Psalms in which the Psalmist calls down the judgment of God upon an adversary. Now if you noticed over in the Book of Acts chapter 1, we read that when Peter stood up he said, "This must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas," and so these texts in Psalm 69 which are cited in verse 20 and Psalm 109, they are texts that we know have to do with Judas.

It always reminds me of an evangelist, who years ago came to Texas, and on Friday before he came into town it was announced that evangelist, Mr. Mughal, would be in town and begin a series of meetings on Sunday. Dr. Chafer use to tell this story to us that a tornado came up on Saturday night and just blew the whole town away. And these were lectures on evangelism and Dr. Chafer after telling us that use to look at us young fellows and say, "Men those were vigorous days." [Laughter]

So it is significant that tonight I am talking about Judas and the wind is really blowing outside. But don't worry. I think we're going to be able to get through it all right.

Now here we are told that these two texts are about Judas. Well, that so disturbed me that because I had always thought of Judas as the kind of fellow who managed to sneak in the back of the church about ten minutes after eleven on Sunday morning and who would slink into the back seat and sit down and hide behind a hymn book during most of the service. I thought of him as that kind of person. Well, this began to make the wheels turn and so I came on the radio the next week and said I'd been so interested in Judas that I have studied Judas this whole week. And I must confess that my whole idea of the kind of person that Judas is was transformed by the study that arose out of reading those imprecatory Psalms.

And I discovered that Judas, instead of being the kind of person who slipped into the pew ten minutes after the hour and manage to beat it out before he could possible speak to anyone, who did not really pay attention to anything that was going on. That kind of person was not the kind of person that Judas was at all. The kind of person that Judas was is the kind of person who serves as an elder in the church or as a deacon. No individuals are being referred to, by the way, in this exposition. [Laughter] Or he is the kind of person who mounts the pulpit and stands behind the pulpit desk and proclaims the ministry of the word of God.

For Judas was a kind of person who had the respect and the high regard of the apostles, and it is evident from the study of his life that he was a man, who of all of the men, was probably the most attractive of them all personally. In the first place, he was the only Judean, so far as we know among them. He was the only person who came from Jerusalem or Judea, and thus was probably much more dignified, probably better educated, more intellectual, apparently, a man of commanding appearance. He was of such a commanding appearance that when the time came to select someone to be

treasurer of the twelve, even though Matthew was there, a man who was use to handling large sums of money, it was Judas who was chosen as the treasurer of the twelve.

So he was a man who had their respect and when he spoke, they listened to him. For when Mary came in and poured out her ointment of spice that was very costly, it was Judas who spoke up and said, Why this ointment could've been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor. And we read that all the rest of the disciples chimed in and "Snorted," the text reads, and snorted over this act that she had done. And Judas had carried their influence with his influence in condemning the action that Mary of Bethany had undertaken to honor and glorify our Lord.

So Judas was a man who had great regard among the apostles. He had been chosen by our Lord Jesus Christ, so there is no question about the fact that he belonged among the twelve. Furthermore, we read that before the Lord Jesus went out to choose the twelve, he prayed all night. And so he did not make a mistake when Judas was chosen. Judas was intended to be one of the twelve. And he was chosen by our Lord Jesus Christ. We know what his character was because when our Lord was just about to be made a king by the followers at the feeding of the five thousand and our Lord escaped through their hands, it was in that very chapter that Judas is described as a person who has a devil. And so it is evident that Judas thought that by joining the company of the apostles, he might have a part in the Messianic Kingdom.

And if he had a significant place in the Twelve, he might have a significant place in the Messianic Kingdom. It was his hope that he could be a lieutenant or a governor over some important territory. He, apparently, was looking for influence in a place of position. And so he was close to Jesus Christ with that political motive in mind. We are not told that specifically in Scripture, but it appears to me evident that it was at that point when Judas began to see or sense that our Lord was not going to be the kind of apostle that he had expected him to be, it was at that point that he began to dip into the common



treasury of the apostles and steal money, putting it in his own pockets. Shortly after that, he makes the compact with the Jewish leaders to betray our Lord.

Now here we are at the last Passover and our Lord has just washed the feet of all of the apostles, including Judas. And it has already entered into his mind to betray the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I want you, if you will, to turn with me to John chapter 13. John chapter 13. For we have a little fuller account of what happened at the last Passover in the Johannine account, which is found in chapter 13. I think John has pictured this in a very beautiful way because he has given us a picture of what happened at that last supper against the treachery of Judas. You young men who are now married, when you went into the jewelry store to buy the ring, have you ever noticed what jewelers do? Well they usually or at least they use to do in the days when I was interested in something like that, they'd take out a black velvet cloth and they lay it down and they put the diamond against the black velvet cloth because it shows up better and it actually looks bigger against the black velvet. And so it seems to me that what has happened here in John chapter 13 is John is giving us the picture of this last Passover and first Lord's Supper against the backdrop of the black velvet of Judas' treachery. So we read in verse 19,

"Now I tell you before it to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 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."

That is was just as striking a statement as if you were personally present in the solution of one of the old murder mysteries that we use to hear over radio or see in moving pictures. When after the action had gone on for about an hour, an hour and fifteen minutes, and everybody is suspected, you know, except those that are already dead. Why suddenly the

chief detective calls everybody into the living room and all of the suspects are gathered into the room. At that solemn moment, everybody is quiet. And Perry Mason is getting ready to speak. He says something like this, "The murderer is in this room."

Now when our Lord said one of you shall betray me, you would have expected that it would be just as solemn as that. And in Mark he added the significant statement, "One of you shall betray me, the one who eats with me." And that, of course, heightens the treachery because in ancient times to sit in someone's house and eat bread with them was, of course, a great favor on the part of the host. It was considered an unusual act of hospitality. And to betray someone at whose table you had been sitting heightens the treachery even more.

So when our Lord says, "One of you shall betray me, one eating with me." The natural reaction would be, "Oh, no! Not that." But that is what he says. "One of you shall betray me." Now the disciples respond and we read in that other account that the disciples looked one on another. Well, here we read, "The disciples looked one on another doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him that he should ask of whom it should be that should spake. He then that is lying on Jesus breasts saith unto him, Lord who is it?" But the other accounts say, you'll remember, that each one of them round this table, they began to speak. And Peter would say, "Is it I, Lord?" Matthew, "Is it I, Lord?" Simon, "Is it I, Lord?" and so on around the table. John, "Is it I, Lord?" until we come to Judas and Judas significantly says, "Is it I, Master?" It is very striking that Judas is the only one who says, "Is it I, Master?"

When I read that in the Bible for the first time and it came home to me, I remembered the text that Paul writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 1 through verse 3, when he says, "No man calleth Jesus Lord except by the Holy Spirit." And it is evident that in this critical moment, it was not within the heart of Judas to say, "Is it I, Lord?"

Now we know it is possible for men to call Jesus Lord and not mean it; for it to be nothing but superficial, a superficial giving to him of a title which is not felt in the heart. But in Judas' case, he did say, "Is it I, Rabbi? Is it I, teacher?" Now I think there's another interesting thing about this. Did you know that right here at this last moment the disciples still do not realize that it is Judas who is to betray our Lord? If he had been the kind of person that I had thought that he was, that I had always had in my mind before I studied Judas, I would have thought that when our Lord said one of you who is eating with me shall betray me, that everybody at the table would say, "Ah, its Judas. I know. It's Judas, I know." But they didn't.

As a matter of fact, they do not even know when our Lord gives him the sop and he goes out because they say, well I guess Judas has been commissioned by the Lord to go out and buy something for the poor. It is evident that Judas has completely fooled the eleven. And so as they go around the table, each one of them asking, "Is it I," they still haven't any idea that it is Judas. But isn't it also an interesting thing that they each said, is it I? Is it I? I think they must have felt deep down in their hearts the insecurity of their sin. Is it I? Is it I? And I'm not so sure that that is not really a healthy Christian attitude, particularly, at this point when the work of redemption has not yet been accomplished. They know our Lord. They are clean on account of the word that he has spoken to them, Jesus has said. But still deep down in their hearts they know something about the treachery of the human heart and they asked, "Is it I, Lord?"

Now our Lord gives his answer and to Judas, of course, when Judas said, "Is it I, Master?" he said, "Thou has said." Jesus answered we read in verse 26, "He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it."

Now the sop was just a little piece of bread which was dipped into the common pot where the lamb was, and ordinarily, the sop would be dipped in, a piece of lamb would be upon it, then the host would give that choice piece of the lamb to the guest. And so our Lord did that. He dipped into the common pot. He gave it to Judas.

About twenty years ago, I was also preaching out at a little schoolhouse not too far from here; actually, on Walnut Hill Lane. It was in the beginning years of the Independent Presbyterian Church which is now the Northwest Bible Church. We were in a schoolhouse and I was preaching on a Sunday night, and I was speaking on Judas. I think it was in the Gospel of Luke. And there was some of the young people sitting on the front row. One young boy was named, Richard Schrader. He was about ten years of age at that time. And at this point, I mentioned just exactly what our Lord did. He reached into the pot and he gave it to Judas. And he was just a little boy sitting right here and I just happened to look at him and I said and he took that little sop and he handed it to him and he said, Judas, are you really going to betray me? For this was Judas' last opportunity, our Lord's appeal to him in a sense. And I handed it to him and he jumped up out of his seat and said, "Don't give it to me. Don't give it to me." [Laughter] Right in the midst of the whole congregation. Well, I can understand exactly how he felt. It sort of shocked me, you know, but he had entered into it so much, he didn't want to be the one to betray our Lord.

You might ask how could Judas betray Jesus Christ. It's more difficult to imagine how Adam could desert God. The fact that Judas betrayed our Lord Jesus Christ is easy to understand in the light of the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden. The difficult thing is to understand how Adam could fall. For Adam was created righteous and holy. And it is very difficult to understand how he out of a righteous and holy nature could turn against God. But Judas now possessed of the principle of sin and a sinful nature. It's easy to understand how Judas can betray God. In fact, it's really startling that everyone does not betray our Lord Jesus Christ. "There is none that seeketh after God. No not one. There is none righteous. No not one. There is none that doeth good. No not one." Paul stresses over and over and over again. Well then, if that is true, if there is none that seeketh after God, if there is none that doeth good, if there is none righteous, then everybody would betray our Lord Jesus Christ. Were it not for the sovereign grace of God

that touches the heart of certain ones and an infallible grace brings them to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, now turning back over to our passage in Mark, for Mark tells us something that John does not tell us. After he has said, "It is one of the twelve that dipped with me in the dish," we read that our Lord added, "The Son of man indeed, goeth as it is written of him but woe to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed." Now I want you to notice that little expression, "by whom". For it is evident from the text at this point, that our Lord is stressing the fact that Judas is an instrument in the betrayal of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." Judas is part of a bigger purpose than even he realized, because you see, the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is not just the death caused by men. It is a death that is caused by God, ultimately. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. It was God's intention that our Lord Jesus should suffer for sins. And since it was God's intention that he should suffer for sins, Judas is the instrumentality for the carrying out of this. "The Son of man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed."

Now he adds these words, "good or better," the Greek text should be taken for this is a positive degree adjective, but used as a comparative here. "Better were it for that man if he had never been born." Now the construction in the Greek text stresses the actuality of the matter and, therefore, the poignancy of it. "Better it would be if that man had not been born," but he has been born and so consequently it's a terrible disaster and a catastrophe for him. That's the force of it. But he says, "If he had never been born."

One of the doctrines that today has gripped a great section of contemporary theology is the doctrine of universalism; the doctrine that everybody is ultimately going to be saved. It very frequently is presented in lines like these. In the word of God we are told that everybody has been elected. Now not everybody knows that they have been elected. The duty of the minister of the word of God is not to tell people that a loving God is going to send men to hell. The duty of the minister who stands behind the sacred

desk today is to tell people that they have been elected. They do not know this, to tell them of the grace of God. Universalism, I say, has captured a good section of contemporary theology today. And the good section of those who teach in our theological institutions in the western world do not believe that men are going to be lost forever and do not believe that men are going to suffer punishment forever. Eternal torment is a very unpopular doctrine. And even in some of our evangelical schools, there is a tendency to tone down the doctrine of eternal torment. Stress eternal separation from God, but not eternal torment. Eternal punishment, do not stress that.

Now our Lord Jesus did not know the doctrine of universalism as a biblical doctrine. He said concerning Judas, "It is better for that man if he had never been born." Now if Judas was going to ultimately find his way into the presence of God, be it a thousand years, be it ten thousand years, be it a hundred thousand years, if Judas is to ultimately find his way into the presence of God and live there throughout all eternity in the bliss of salvation, then all of the suffering that he may undergo in the meantime would be worth it, in the light of eternity.

As I have said before to you, the poet has captured it perfectly, "Who counts the billows when the shore is won?" Who cares how you have to struggle to get to shore if you get there? If your life is saved? And so if it is true that everybody is going to be saved, well then who counts the billows? Our Lord didn't know that. He said, "It would be good for that man if he had never been born."

Now I want you to notice another thing. It says here, in verse 21, "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him." Did you notice, "As it is written of him?" In other words, in the text which speaks of the responsibility of Judas, "It's good for that man if he had never been born. Woe unto the man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed." Judas is responsible for his deed. At the same time in the same passage, it is stated that Judas fulfills Scripture in doing what he did. And so we have combined here the

doctrines of the sovereignty of God in the working out of his purposes and the responsibility of human agents. These two doctrines are taught in the word of God.

There are people who cannot understand man's spiritual inability. They do not realize that if his spiritual inability is due to his sin, that he is therefore responsible. That man must be able to believe and repent in order to be responsible for unbelief and impenitency, is a doctrine that finds its way into the heart of the natural man because it is reasonable to the natural man. Remember I have a friend and I mentioned this to you, I have a friend who likes to say that Arminianism is the religion of common sense, but Calvinism is the religion of Saint Paul. There's a lot of truth in that. Every body is born a natural Pharisee. Every body is born a natural legalist. Every body is born a natural Arminian. All of these arguments which seem so natural to us are only natural arguments. They belong to the natural man. Why in fact, that kind of reasoning is directly contrary to Scripture, because if responsibility were measured by our ability, then that would mean the more sinful a man becomes the less responsible he is. And so the more sin the less responsibility. That kind of doctrine is unscriptural. It is blasphemous.

Now John tells us that Judas received the sop and he went out. And I think John tells us that purposefully. He tells us in effect that Judas is leaving, was a voluntary act. It was a kind of self-excommunication. There is no mitigating circumstances whatsoever. Judas leaves that apostolic company and he went out. The Bible, you know I think, gives us a commentary on Judas' action that is better than anything any preacher could ever give. The Bible says, concerning some false teachers in John the Apostle's day, "They went out from us because they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have continued with us." And that truth pertains to Judas. He went out from the apostles because he was not of them. He was not one who really had the essence of the Christian life. If he had had the essence of the Christian life, he would have continued with them. That is Christian truth. When men leave the company of the saints and of the Lord Jesus

Christ, it frequently is because they are not of them. If they really were of our Lord, they would continue.

And then John adds the significant statement, "And it was night." How fitting. For you see Judas in leaving the company of the Light of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the light of that upper room furnished with mementos of the Lamb that is to suffer for sins, Judas leaves that room, goes out and goes out into the night. And so the man who leaves the presence of the Light of the world spiritually, there is not light except in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. And when a man leaves him, he goes out into darkness. That's why the Bible speaks about the blackness of darkness forever. Judas is the living picture of a man who had all of the opportunities, who had all of the abilities natural, who had all of the talents, who had all that any man might ask by way of privilege, and who left the presence of our Lord and went out into the blackness or darkness forever.

I had intended tonight to speak about how our Lord was able to cite Psalm 41 and verse 9, where he said that in Judas' leaving the Scripture is fulfilled. For after all, when you read the Old Testament, you don't normally think of Judas being found in the Old Testament. But our Lord found him there, because he read the Old Testament in a way quite different from the way some of us read the Old Testament today. You see in Psalm 41, verse 9, it is stated, "That one who sits at the table shall lift up his heel against me." And when you read Psalm 41, verse 9, you realize it is David speaking. Now it is not David speaking directly ...

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**