

Series: Lent
Text:
Date: 2/25/18
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Sermon:

What comes to your mind when you hear the name “Abraham Lincoln?” How many images and connections and associations immediately come to mind when you hear that name? And if I were to speak the name, “Adolf Hitler?” What thoughts, what emotions does that name provoke? Names are powerful. Our name is our identity, especially to those who happen to know us or our story. The name and the story go together.

“Judas Iscariot.” Now there’s a name with a story. We want to explore his story as it’s recorded in the Scriptures so we can use Judas to get close to Jesus.

To study the life of Judas is to hear the call of John the Baptist - REPENT for the Kingdom of God is close and turn from the life you are leading. To study the life of Judas is to take a look in the mirror ... and make the right choices!

a. Judas’ ultimate betrayal was no “surprise” to God, as prophesied in David’s Psalm. Psalm 41:9 *Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate bread with me, has turned against me.*

Judas had his own list of what was important in life. He wanted the money to further the Zealot cause of trying to overthrow the Roman government. According to him, that was the real reason Jesus was supposed to have come. He was blinded by his “Zealot agenda.”

The devil is at work here and here. Somewhere along the line, we don’t know when or where it was, a question, a doubt, a suspicion was planted. It took root and grew, just about the same way that true faith is planted in the heart by the hearing of the word and takes root and grows, or withers and dies.

The night of the Last Supper where Jesus establishes His last will and testament, in the “New Covenant of the Lords Supper.” He specifies the inheritance as His very body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. It is interesting now that I think of it, that whenever **the church** receives Jesus blessing, it always does so by saying, “on the night when he was betrayed...”

Today we focus on the cross and forgiveness for us In Jesus. Humble our self in the sight of the Lord in our living for Jesus. Humility and surrendering to the will of the Lord. The only thing that matters in life is relationships. God thinks so

He created relationships. God Went to extreme measures to maintain and give hope for relationships and Life.

It begins with Love the Lord above all things and people....including are pride and guilt and confessing our sin. Our stubborn humanness, our brokenness our sins that cause guilt and shame and overwhelm us to the point that we sometimes feel we are unworthy.

Then we come “just as we are” to trust Jesus...Our tests In life to grow us in faith in Jesus.

God wants to see where are heart is. **Forgiveness is the key to God’s redemption and eternal life.** When I

realize the seriousness of my sin before God and receive His redemption in Christ, God's forgiveness penetrates my very nature, cleansing me and freeing me from sin's bondage

God's forgiveness is a miracle of His grace and mercy. Because God is holy, the only way to forgive sin is through the painful, shameful cross of Jesus Christ. The only ground on which God can forgive sin and reinstate us in His favor, is through the Cross of Christ, and in no other way."

To experience God's grace and forgiveness, God must first humble you. **We are blind to our need.** "Through the law we become conscious of sin" The law shocks us into our responsibility for sin. We see our utter helplessness to forgive and change. We can receive the grace of God only when we despair of our own ability. This despair awakens humility. At this point of hopelessness, we finally bottom out and die to our performance.

God's liberating grace comes to those who call upon the lord Jesus. In this humility grace is showered on us in the power of the resurrection. "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5). God's way of making you righteous is to let the law humble you in your sin and failure, so that grace can save you and give you mercy and forgiveness. This humility is saving faith. Trusting in Jesus...to Have Mercy on us...

God has given us the ultimate sacrifice to make payment for our sin. He gives us His Son to die on the cross, He calls us unto himself and to seek forgiveness in His mercy at the cross. He fiercely and faithfully holds on to every last sinner, every last fallen child of God.

There is **NO sin that is not covered by His blood.** His love is that great. God the Father extends His hand over you and gives you His greatest blessing. He puts a breastplate of righteousness on you.

We don't know the future. We don't know the struggles and tests that it might bring. But Jesus wants you to know the comfort of His LOVE for you for all time. His Son. God now calls you His son, His daughter... We live to give Him honor and glory and Praise. Let us keep on the journey of forgiveness and walk the road to Calvary, reflecting on the love of Christ and resting in the peace only His love can bring, Amen

Join in confession of sins....