

The Traitor at the Table
Mark 14:12-21

Well, as we turn to Mark 14, I just want to pose some thoughts before you as we look at this passage that continues to bring us closer to the death of our Savior that we've been studying, and that question is to what extent is God in control of all things, to what extent is God planning, working, and moving in this world? How is it that God interacts? How is it that God chooses to really function as the Creator and Sustainer? Obviously, many people like to posit that, you know, there is some type of God. He created, and then He's just been hands off ever since. He set it into motion, and He hasn't touched creation, and He's just letting man do his thing trying to figure it out. Others say, no, He's a little more active than that, and they say that God has set things into motion, and He reaches down to act every so often to try and keep things from going off the rails, but He lets, for the most part, a lot of things take place. And some people go farther and say, no, I think it's not just that He lets things take place, He actually knows what's going to happen. And then there's others that would say it's not just that He has set everything into motion and He knows what's going to happen, but He continues to determine what will happen next.

And I think what we find here in this particular passage, in these moments leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus, is an explanation of how God does interact and to what extent God is in control. And I think we have to conclude that He is intimately involved, and He interacts, and He controls every detail as He works and moves His plan along in Creation. That's what takes place when we look at what is happening with Jesus and all the details, all of the events, the conversations, the moments that lead up to Him going to the cross and being crucified as our Savior. We will see God's sovereignty, His control of all things, come alive in Jesus' control of all things in these moments as we come to some very intimate moments and some heavy and burdensome moments this morning.

Let's look at our passage to check this out for ourselves in Mark 14:12-21, and let's see this come alive; "And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, 'Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?' And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the

master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.’ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.’ They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, ‘Is it I?’ He said to them, ‘It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.’ This is our passage for this morning, and as you can tell, we’re moving right up to these final moments, these final moments that will take place. This is, really, the night before, the evening before, Jesus would then go to be arrested and be crucified the next day. This is where we find ourselves.

No longer are we back at the beginning of the week. Right? As we’ve been covering where people were triumphantly excited and really exclaiming these wonderful shouts of praise as Jesus was coming into the city, no longer are we at that triumphal entry. No longer are we at the moment where Jesus cleanses the temple, and no longer are we at that moment where He’s there, and He’s having these religious leaders come, and He’s putting them to shame and teaching publicly, openly, and making Himself and, really, the truth known. And we’re no longer at the moments where He starts to retreat with His disciples and begins to talk about the end times in the Olivette Discourse when He spoke of His own return and what would take place around His own second coming. We have now gotten right up to these final moments as it’s been labeled, rightly called. This is The Last Supper. This is special, and it’s not just because it’s His last meal, and this is the last time He gets to interact with them. It’s because of the content of which is shared in a meal such as this. That’s what we’ll begin to see.

This meal is a Passover meal, and this is where we are at this time, this time in Jerusalem, with many Jews there for this Festival of the Passover. And so, as we look at our passage this morning, the first main portion of verses 12-16 is all about preparation, preparing for this Passover, preparing for this meal, preparing for the very thing, really, they came down to Jerusalem for. This is why they journeyed out of Galilee in the north down south into

Judea, into Jerusalem where the temple was for this celebration, this feast - Passover and Unleavened Bread. Thus, in verse 12, to kick it all off, there is the expected question that comes from the disciples; “And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, ‘Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?’ ” This is why we’re here, right Jesus? So how is this working out? How is this going to take place? What are the details? Where are we eating? How is this happening?

So, just to remind you, this is why we have this amazing moment in Christ’s life, not just because He went to Jerusalem, and He would die on a cross, but because everyone was there. It was Passover, one of these three major festivals, these three major holidays, that happened once a year where they were required to show themselves and to represent their household down in Jerusalem no matter where you lived. Thus, that explains the thousands upon thousands of Jewish people that were here in Jerusalem at this time. Jesus and His own disciples being some of those who are there not even able to stay in Jerusalem because it’s so busy, and there’s just not enough room. They’ve been staying in Bethany and coming in every day, but now we will see them stay in Jerusalem for this particular moment, for this Passover meal.

That’s where we get to.. In verse 12, Mark reminds us of that scene; “And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb...” And so, we really need to kind of recognize and see that background to this whole entire scene and situation because it’s so easy for us to read this and kind of not really understand the background, the culture, the context and what they were so used to. This is their life. This is what they do. You and I, we have our lives. We celebrate New Year’s. We celebrate the Fourth of July. And those are big deals, and we have the typical traditions of how we celebrate those things. Them too. They too have this with Passover. This was their New Year and their Fourth of July kind of combined into one. This was their moment where they were actually identified as God brought them out of Egypt, and this was the starting point for them. This would be the first month of the year for them because of this significant event in their own history. So, this was a big deal, and we can read this and think, okay, this is just a time when they’re eating a different kind of meal. Actually, there’s a lot more to this. This is them celebrating God’s work in their nation going back thousands of years.

So, the Passover, specifically you will recall, comes out of Exodus. If you go to the book of Exodus, you see just the whole background unfold in a very dramatic fashion. You can remember this whole idea of how you had the Israelite people in bondage, slaves, in Egypt. For four hundred and thirty years they were there serving the Egyptians. There was this time, if you go all the way back to the book of Genesis, where you had the patriarchs, people like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then a famine came upon the land where they were. So, they had to go to Egypt. So, they're driven into Egypt, and as time went on, they became slaves in that land, and this went on for centuries, for hundreds of years, until finally we actually read in Exodus 2:24, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." He remembered His people that were there enslaved in Egypt, and He chose to act, and you recall how that was. This is some of the greatest stuff to read in the Old Testament. When you think about Moses and Aaron confronting Pharaoh, coming to him in this grand nation and saying, "...let [God's] people go...", and Pharaoh having the hard heart and saying, no!

And what then ensued after that as plague after plague came and God was just showing just the finger of His power, just a little bit of what God can do. If you remember after water was turned into blood, after invasions of frogs and gnats and flies, after the death of livestock, after boils on the bodies of the people, after destructive hail, after ruinous locusts and absolute darkness, God determines to unleash the tenth and final plague upon the Egyptians, that is the plague that was the death of their first born, the death of the first born of all the Egyptians and even their cattle. This was the background here for God delivering His people from Egypt, and this is the whole context for why you have this wonderful celebration for them, a New Year, their independence from Egypt. This is massive for the Israelite people, and so to remember this moment, to remember that grand exit from Egypt when they did leave, and they crossed the Red Sea, and they drowned Pharaoh and his army, to remember all these plagues, to remember this whole entire scene, this Passover meal was instituted by God. It was not just a one time thing that they did as they were leaving that night, as they left Egypt, but this was something they were to continue to do year after year so as to pass it along from generation to generation.

As they would have this meal, this meal that Jesus and the disciples are about to have, they would just be loaded with significance. And children at the feast and other people there would ask questions. Why are we doing this, and what is this all about? Why get together? Why come to Jerusalem for this? Why are we doing this? And there would be opportunity to continue to remind the next generation of what God had done for His people in the past in Egypt and the deliverance they experienced. Thus, you have this institution of Passover that happened back in Exodus that's still being practiced and remembered here with Jesus and His disciples and the rest of the Jewish people. They would have an animal (each Israelite household was set apart to take, really, a male sheep or goat that was at least a year of age), and this animal would be sacrificed and then eaten in the Passover meal. And if you remember back in Exodus, there was a requirement. Where did Passover come from? Because in the carrying out of the final plague of the death of the first born when God went through and actually killed all the first born of the Egyptian households, there was the Israelites who were there too, but yet, they were spared. Why? Because of the blood from that one-year old sheep or lamb that they took, and they spread that blood on the doorpost, and God would pass over their houses. This was to be remembered, and so to preserve this they would still celebrate this meal where they would take that one-year old male lamb or goat and they would slaughter it, and they would use it as food for the Passover meal. It preserved the life of everyone back in the book of Exodus, and it would continue to remind people to this day at Jesus' time of what God had done.

God gave, actually, quite a few amounts of specifications for this meal. If you look at Exodus 12, you get a lot of those. That is, it was to be done on the fourteenth day of the month. This month would become the first month for them in their calendar of the New Year. The lamb was to be roasted. All of it was to be consumed; nothing could be left or saved. They were actually to eat the meal in kind of an upright fashion with their belts fastened. They had their staffs next to them, and their sandals were on and ready to leave because that very night God delivers them, and they would leave Egypt. Also, Passover would coincide with what we have mentioned here, the first day of Unleavened Bread. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is what came as the week that included the first day of Passover, and then went seven days after that. So, while Passover was the fourteenth day of the month, that's also when the Feast of Unleavened Bread started and went to the twenty-first day of the month. Why? Why this Feast of Unleavened Bread, this idea that

God wanted them for a week to not eat good bread but to not allow leaven or yeast to be in their bread so they had flat bread, these kind of bland crackers that they had to eat? Why? To remind them of the haste in which they left, the swift fashion in which they had to leave that night and get out of Egypt and be delivered by God. This is all kind of built into what Jesus and the disciples are doing. This is just normal for them. You and I have to go back and read these things and be reminded of, how did they prepare this meal? And why is there significance in this? And what's the point of all this? They were living this year in and year out - normal for them.

So, the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, the Passover meal itself, the entire week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, became instituted in connection, all with God's deliverance of His people from Egypt, and these practices were instituted as mandatory annual observances for the people of Israel. So, Jesus, as a Jew being born as a Jew under the Law, would too follow this command as God commanded His people. So Jesus and the disciples, you have to think. It's not even stated here necessarily because it's talking about all of the Jewish people when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, so, too, Jesus and His disciples sacrificed the Passover lamb. Jesus and the disciples would've gone to the temple to sacrifice this lamb. As one commentator states, "According to Jewish convention, Jesus would have slit the animal's throat. Its blood would've been drained into a silver or gold basin held by a priest, and the priest would've taken the basin to the alter where he would've sprinkled the blood at the base of the alter. Throughout the course of the day, thousands of lambs would've been slaughtered in this fashion." That continues to paint a picture for us.

So, during this time for Jesus, for His disciples, for all the Jewish people there in Jerusalem, not only was it busy because there was a lot of people there, but think of what was happening at the temple. Think of the massive line that there was at the temple. Think of the blood that was spilt that day as all these households and all these people gathered with their offering, with their Passover lamb, to have it slaughtered and the blood sprinkled. This is a busy day in the temple. In fact, Josephus, one Jewish historian at that time, he estimates about two hundred and fifty thousand lambs were slaughtered in one year. I mean, this is a busy day for the temple, a busy day for the people. Because not only now are you taking your lamb to be slaughtered, you are then going and preparing the meal by which you will eat that lamb and everything else as commanded. This is a busy day for the people. So,

Jesus and the disciples would be doing the same exact thing and planning to eat the meal. Also, the meal was required, even if you look at the Old Testament, to be had and partaken of in Jerusalem. Deuteronomy 16:5-7 states, “You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, but at the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt. And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the Lord your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents.” This is why His disciples say, so what are the plans, Jesus? Because we know we need to sacrifice this lamb, and we also know that we need to have this meal here in Jerusalem. It’s not like we just retreat and go back outside and go to Bethany, or we go to some other place and have this meal. This is in Jerusalem. So, how’re we doing this? What are the plans?

This was their expectation, and this is the normal practice for them. So, Jesus responds with some rather specific instructions. In verses 13-15, He gives some specifics for them; “And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, ‘Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” Our text simply says, “And he sent two of his disciples...” You look at Luke’s passage, you find out who they are. It’s Peter and John. Jesus sends Peter and John, and it’s also speculated that part of this preparation wasn’t just going to the house and getting the room ready but also actually taking the lamb that was to be slaughtered - it’s speculated (it isn’t for sure). But only two people were allowed to accompany a lamb to the temple to be slaughtered because otherwise you had even more people and even more of a crowd than you need. So, it’s very possible that Peter and John are the ones responsible for taking that lamb, for going to that bloody site, that bloody scene, at the temple and seeing this lamb be slaughtered and seeing the blood sprinkled, while then going that night to hear Jesus speak about His own blood and His own body and what would take place the next day; this image fresh in Peter’s and John’s minds as they go to prepare this meal - not only responsible for slaughtering this animal but also preparing the room in which they will dine.

And that's where this "...man carrying a jar of water..." would be found, and as a servant, lead them to the house where we apparently find is a pretty wealthy master. He owns this house. He has servants, and he has a guest room which is a luxury. Not everyone has guest rooms, and not everyone has this big of guest rooms to be able to host this big of a crowd. Apparently, this has all been set up. Jesus has organized this. He's in control of this. Right? Jesus is not coming down to Jerusalem and He's not here saying, well, you know what? I just had a couple good days of teaching, and everyone seems to like Me. We'll see how this pans out. We'll see what happens at the end of the week. Maybe the people will change in their opinion. Maybe they'll decide, you know what? We do want Jesus as our ruler. We do want Him as our King. Maybe that's what's going to happen. No. Jesus even with what's been taking place and unfolding over this week even with these moments of victory over the religious leaders and teaching the truth, He still knows what is before Him. He must go to the cross. He must die, so He prepares. He prepares all these details. He prepares this location where they will have this meal. And as I said, the significance will not simply lie in it's the last meal that they have together, but not just even that it's the Passover meal, but the significance will continue to lie in what is even discussed and stated at this meal.

So, Peter and John find this large upper room that is furnished and ready, and they set it up to prepare in verse 16. It's exactly what Jesus said is what they find. This is what they identify. They identify that Jesus' preparations are in fact spot on. The disciples set out, went to the city and found it just as He had told them. And they prepared the Passover meal. They went to the city that is in Jerusalem and found it just as Jesus said as He has full control, absolute sovereignty, full control over all these events and details. Peter and John, not only in sacrificing the lamb but in preparing the Passover meal had some work to do there. One commentator states, "Preparation for the Passover meal entailed roasting the lamb and providing unleavened biscuits, bitter herbs, sauce, water, and wine." So, there was more work to be done even for the meal itself. You can imagine that, as this moment came, Jesus' heart started to feel more and more heavy. Different moments in Jesus' life, I'm sure He felt that heavy burden of what was before Him and the obedience that He needed to exercise. But going into this meal, we know for a fact that His heart was heavy, and largely because of the significant moment that we find in verses 17-21 where the traitor is pronounced – the traitor is pronounced; verses 17-18 we read, "And when it was evening, he

came with the twelve. And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.’ ” This is where we have the assertion, the flat-out assertion of a traitor. There is a traitor, and Jesus makes this abundantly clear.

We see that eventually evening rolls around though. They get to the house. They come here to actually have this moment where they will, in obeying God, be participating in this Passover meal. In our account, we just see that He came with the twelve. It’s very probable that there were other people there as this was a family type of meal. You probably did have women and children around because they were the ones that needed to learn and understand the significance of such an event that took place in their history. But we find that “...they were reclining at table and eating...”, and they’re enjoying this time.

What was this Passover meal like? We can gather a little bit from the Old Testament and even from the New Testament and other places and outside sources. And one person has outlined it in this way, “The order of Passover meal was first drinking a cup of red wine mixed with water; second, the ceremonial washing of hands symbolizing the need for spiritual and moral cleansing; third, eating the bitter herbs symbolic of the bondage in Egypt; fourth; drinking the second cup of wine at which time the head of the household explained the meaning of Passover; fifth, singing the Hallel that is Psalms 113-118; sixth, the lamb was brought out and the head of the household distributed pieces of it with the unleavened bread; and seventh, drinking the third cup of wine.” This was a loaded meal with different parts and different portions and significance all throughout as it was meant to teach – meant to teach. Of course, they’re enjoying their time together because they have a great God they serve, and they get to remind themselves of what God has done for them as a people, but they continue to enjoy the intimate fellowship that they have with the Messiah as the disciples enjoy this time. But Jesus kind of gets somber here. I mean, He has to change the tone. He has to get their attention. He has to let them in on His troubled Spirit. He reveals for the first time that one of the twelve will betray Him. There is actually the traitor there with them in that room. He’d be one of the ones eating with Jesus.

Imagine how these words must have landed upon the disciples. Jesus already having a heavy heart, realizing the task in front of Him, and then imagine the

disciples and their response. Already being slow to learn, already having a hard time to really embrace and grasp what Jesus talks about when He talks about Him going to His own death, and now Jesus is talking about a traitor in the room. I mean, what confusion and sorrow must fill them. They're just shocked by this. The thought of someone betraying Jesus is outrageous, but it helps us get kind of emotionally there in this meal. What was taking place, this was not a peaceful evening, a wonderful joyful time, this was tragic. This was burdensome. This was sorrowful. This was confusing. One commentator states it this way, "Most popular paintings of the Last Supper depict the disciples sitting serenely around the table. Judas is usually identified as dark and shifty-eyed. Mark's depiction of this meal differs significantly from these portraits. The most appropriate portrait of his portrayal of The Last Supper would paint each disciple's face with a look of horror. The eat and drink in an atmosphere of sorrow and worry. The central question preoccupying their minds is not the fate of Jesus but who might be the one to betray Him." Now you have a glimpse, an idea, of just how burdensome this would be for everyone in that room at that moment especially at a meal that was so loaded with significance and celebration of what God had done for His people.

In our text we see the disciples respond and Jesus acknowledge the traitor in more specific terms here. The acknowledgment of the traitor in verses 19-20; "They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, 'Is it I?' He said to them, 'It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.'" Look at their sorrowful response. They all probably have that sorrow and confusion mixed in, not fully understanding and grasping what's happening but not wanting to be the one that betrays Jesus; that's for sure. So, then asking these questions, "Is it I?" Am I the one? I mean, think about all that they had been through with Jesus. Think about how (of all the people, of all the Jewish people living, of all the people that were in Galilee, the family members, those that were close) there were these twelve. These twelve that were so privileged. I mean, to be able to go in and out with Jesus and to see what He does. Just to be witnesses to more than one occasion of Him doing the miraculous, that might stick with you a little bit. You start to develop some type of intimacy with someone when you start to see these things unfold. And you start to hear Him teach and you see how He leads people perfectly with compassion and kindness, and you start to even see how He interacts with you and how you feel loved and one of His own. And you experience this over the course of not just days but months and years,

and you're a part of this group. You feel like I'm on the inside. I could not be more privileged. And then this bomb just drops on the conversation. This bomb just lands in the middle of that meal; someone's going to betray You. It's going to be one of us.

It's totally understandable that they have this reaction of confusion and horror and not wanting to be the one that is going to betray them. Jesus says, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me." This is pretty common that they would have different dishes out at this table, so it's very likely that Jesus says, "It is one of the twelve, [and to be more specific) one who is [actually near Me right now]." Because as they had different dishes kind of along the tables as they were reclining there, only a few of them would reach certain dishes, and then other ones would reach the other bowls and dishes by them. So, it was one that was probably near Him. That's what Mark tells us. Well, we look in Matthew and John and we get even more specific. In Matthew 26:25, "Judas, who would betray him, answered, 'Is it I, Rabbi?' He said to him, 'You have said so.'" Pretty clear. John 13:25-26; "So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, 'Lord, who is it?' Jesus answered, 'It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.' So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot." No questions here. Very clear, dramatic and tragic at this moment who the traitor is. That it's Judas, and, really, we don't think that Mark's trying to protect him or keep it vague for an intentional reason. If we just looked at verse 10-11 right before our text this morning, we'd get reminded, oh, that's right; "Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them." Mark obviously has written this in a way that we all knew he's talking about Judas at this point. This is the shocking reality that there would be a traitor, and it gets revealed at this most intimate moment, at a moment like this at the Passover meal with Jesus and His disciples,

Table fellowship had pretty big significance for the Jewish people. Sharing a meal with someone wasn't just a common, normal thing. It was actually a big signal and sign of trust and friendship here. So, for it to be at this moment and for these words to even be stated in the way that they are by Jesus, just shows how heinous and terrible this act was on Judas' part. Even the Old Testament prophesies this in Psalm 41:9; "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, he has lifted his heel against me." In John's account, he actually quotes that Psalm as referring to Judas and his

betrayal. It's terrible, a terrible thing, and a terrible cloud that has now come and filled the room in this Passover meal. Jesus delivers a pretty strong statement here to finish off our passage. In verse 21, we see the accountability, the full responsibility that this traitor has for what he does; verse 21, "For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." Wow! It's a strong statement.

You see, this perfect and kind of affirming statement that we know throughout Scripture, and that I mentioned at the beginning of our time; "For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him..." Jesus goes to His death as it's even been prophesied, as Jesus Himself has predicted, as the Old Testament prophets centuries ago have predicted. You think of passages like Psalm 22, Isaiah 53. This was God's plan. God planned, He sovereignly ordained and ordered that His Messiah would die, would suffer. This was no mistake. This was no change of plan. This was no thinking on the fly. This was planned. This was God's sovereign choice. And so, Jesus admits, "For the Son of Man [referring to Himself] goes as it is written of him..." This is God's plan, and we can now expand that plan to include, not just Him suffering, not just Him being arrested and persecuted and then getting crucified, but we include now in that plan the fact that He would be betrayed. That's what's been written in Psalm 41. This was a part of God's plan, that His own Son would be betrayed in this way. This is God's sovereignty at work. This is God intimately involved in the details and moving and ordering things to accomplish His ends and His goals.

But what is amazing is to see what Jesus says after that. This is what has been written. This is God's plan; "...but woe to that man..." ... "...woe to [Judas] by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." And so, you might think, well, if God's involved, and if God plans and sovereignly ordains and orders the events in the way that He wants, then how can He hold Judas accountable? How can He hold him responsible for this? This is Judas not just a robot and a pawn in the hand of God. Why should Judas be at fault? This is full accountability, full responsibility for mankind including at this moment, Judas Iscariot. Even though God sovereignly planned and prophesied these events, He doesn't excuse Judas. He still holds him accountable, responsible, for this betrayal, and this is really the case with the rest of mankind. You're on this planet. You've received God's goodness dumped into your lap. You have

been created. You have God's goodness all over you. You are in this world. You see His handiwork. You experience all of these processes that keep you alive and keep, really, all living things in motion. You experience this goodness of God day in and day out, yet you are accountable. You are responsible. You will stand before God. You will have to give an account for what you've done. No one escapes. No one's able to say it's not my fault; you made me do it. No. God is in control, yet mankind has still made his decision.

People like to say, well, that's not fair. It just doesn't seem fair to me that God would do that. And I don't mind opening the discussion to what's fair. I just think we have to be honest about it. What is fair? Would it be fair if God just destroyed all of mankind? Of course! Of course, it'd be fair because the second that mankind rebelled in sin, they have no right to be in relationship with God. They have no right to be in existence, but what does God do? He's kind. He's merciful, He's gracious. You want to talk about what's fair? You should be amazed that you're even talking and asking the question, what's fair? Because you are a rebel against God's will, but God in His kindness has chosen to pour out His wrath upon His own Son as opposed to you and me, guilty mankind. We are accountable. We are responsible. We will stand and give an account to God. And it'd be terrible to be in Judas' position, for those who have been given more revelation of God will be held to a higher standard. One commentator states, "Because the terror that Judas would experience in hell would be so great the severest punishment is reserved for Judas and others like him. This is one of the strongest statements in Scripture on human responsibility for believing in Jesus Christ coupled with the consequences of such unbelief." It's as Hebrews 10:29 states, "How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?" Judas was exposed to God's glory in Jesus up close, front row seat to the action, to see all this, and yet here he is delivering Christ over just for money, betraying Him. He will pay. He will be punished. He will be accountable. He will be responsible for what he's done.

Even in the midst of that, mankind being responsible for what they've done, God is still in complete control. He's still moving His plan forward despite the sinfulness of man, despite the errors of our ways. He perfectly moves His plan forward in a sovereign fashion. He's not hands-off. He's not sitting up

in heaven wondering what's going to happen next. He knows, and He acts. He is a sovereign God. He is King over this universe, and He has control of all things, and it's because of that sovereignty that we get Him utilizing one of the most wicked and sinful acts of mankind to bring about the greatest good and love that you and I experience. And that's fitting that we go to communion now because that is what we look to, that love displayed in the evil action of crucifying the Son of God.