

REDEMPTION SERIES

WEEK 2 - MARK 14:21-12

(Corresponding Passages: Matthew 26:17-25, Luke 22:7-13, John 13:1-17)

Reflection

In the text for this week we find Jesus and the 12 disciples sharing the Passover meal together. At one point in the evening Jesus stops the conversation and says, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." Talk about an awkward way to start a conversation! The disciples' response to this comment is a bit surprising - you would expect them to begin pleading their innocence or attempting to prove their allegiance to the one they have proclaimed to be "The Christ." Instead they become dejected and one after another ask Jesus, "Is it me? Am I the one to sell you out?"

This response is interesting because you would think that the group of men who had personally followed Jesus around for 3 years, seen him heal the masses and perform miracles would be absolutely sure of their standing with Jesus. Instead they all begin to question whether they will be the one who betrays the Son of God.

The doctrine of the universality of sin teaches us that we all possess the capability of selling our God out and making temporal things ultimate over the creator of all things. We see that the disciples, based on their response to Jesus, all had a great understanding of this human trait. Romans 3:23 tells us that, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," and that likewise we are "justified by his grace." Praise God!

We know from reading further in the story that Judas is the disciple who ultimately betrays Jesus. However, the significance of the story this week is that although Judas acted on the betrayal, any one of the disciples were just as capable to have committed the same sin, and they knew it. And if the disciples were capable of such a heinous act - how much more so are we!

Questions

1. What are your first impressions from this week's reading? Is there anything that strikes you as interesting from the scripture reading?
2. If you had been present at the meal that evening, how would you have responded to Jesus' statement about his impending betrayal? Would you have responded differently to the disciples?
3. How have you thought of Judas in the past? Do you judge him for his decision to betray Jesus? Are there other people in your life or in this world that you judge based on their sinful decisions?
4. A philosopher once said, "The line dividing good and evil goes down the center of every human heart." Please explain this statement. Why is this significant to this study?
5. In what ways should the doctrine of the universality of sin change the way you look at friends, family and co-workers? In what way should this same doctrine change the way you look at mass murders, rapists, molesters, oppressors and any one else who, by their sin, have dramatically altered the lives of yourself and those you love?