
Words of Truth

Don't Go And Hang Yourself

By: Brian A. Yeager

From what is recorded about Judas Iscariot we can see that he was a wicked man. We know him as the betrayer of Christ (Matthew 10:4, Matthew 26:25, Mark 3:19, Mark 14:10, Luke 6:16, Luke 22:48, John 13:2, and John 18:2; 5). Judas was also a thief that plotted against the Lord's work, to take that money for himself (John 12:1-6). He put much time and thought into his transgressions. This certainly fits what the Scriptures define as a wicked person (Jeremiah 5:26).

The expectation for the wicked is that they will perish (Psalms 37:20). Sinners can expect to reap what they have sown (Jeremiah 32:19, Romans 2:6-10, and Galatians 6:7-8). When a person or group of people understand that wickedness leaves you in a terrible position with God, it is easy to think hope is gone (Jeremiah 2:25).

So let's come back to Judas for a moment. The betrayer of Christ had a moment wherein he realized how vile he was. Notice what happened: *"Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.... And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him... When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself"* (Matthew 26:20-25; 47-50; 27:1-5). Judas was sorry for what he did. Yet, he ended any hope he might have had.

Don't Ever Allow Sorrow To Lead You To Hopelessness

God expects each of us who are saints to live faithfully, without sinning, throughout our lives (Matthew 5:48, John 8:1-11, Romans 6:1-2, II Corinthians 7:1, I Peter 1:13-16, I Peter 2:21-22, I John 2:3-6, and I John 3:1-10). Yet, if we sin He does not want us to act like everything is okay and ignore it (I John 1:7-10). Think about this: *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”* (I John 2:1).

So, let's say that one of us or all of us fail our Lord and sin against Him. We should certainly loathe ourselves for that (Ezekiel 20:43). Yet, rather than do something that will cause us to be lost forever, we should use that feeling of self-hatred towards repenting like Job did (Job 42:1-6). Godly sorrow will work in us, if we allow it to, to bring about real changes and restoration to God (II Corinthians 7:9-10).

We serve the Lord who takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:32 and Ezekiel 33:11). God does not want you to realize the errors of your ways, if such occurred, and then do something that would keep you from being saved. Our Lord's desire is that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4). Therefore, God has maintained a long standing standard of a willingness to forgive the sins of His people whom truly repent and turn back to Him.

God Has Long Desired His Erring Children To Repent And Be Restored

While Jesus taught that sinners can choose between repentance or perishing (Luke 13:1-5), His desire is that sinners repent (II Peter 3:9). Under the Law of Moses His sinful people were told this: *“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land”* (II Chronicles 7:14). When you turn to the New Testament, you see that such has not changed (James 4:4-10).

If you were to find yourself transgressing against Christ, don't lose sight of His goal. His goal is the salvation of the lost (Luke 19:1-10). That means vile people can turn from their sins and be saved (Ephesians 2:1-10, Colossians 1:12-21, and Titus 3:3). Being lost in sin certainly is not a thing to rejoice over, but being restored is (Luke 15:1-32).

Conclusion

Don't go and hang yourself (figuratively or literally) if you fall short of God's expectations. Confess those sins and make it right (Proverbs 28:13). After being corrected, get up and move forward (Hebrews 12:5-13).