

Forgiveness and Forsakenness - the meaning of the Cross explained (II)

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[0 : 00] But we're going to turn now to our Bible reading this morning. You'll find it in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 26. Continuing our studies in Matthew's preaching of the cross.

And we looked last week at the upper room. We're going to read again most of that same passage and further on into the story of Gethsemane.

These two parts of the chapter go very much together. So we're going to begin reading at Matthew 26 at verse 20. And that's page 832 if you have one of the visitors' Bibles.

When it was evening, Jesus reclined at table with the twelve. And as they were eating, he said, Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me.

And they were sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, Is it I, Lord? He answered, He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him.

[1 : 10] But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had not been born. Judas, who would betray him, answered, Is it I, Rabbi?

He said to him, You have said so. Now as they were eating, that is the Passover, Jesus took bread and after blessing it, Broke it and gave thanks to his disciples and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took a cup when he had given thanks. He gave it to them saying, Drink of it, all of you, For this is my blood of the covenant, Which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

I tell you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine Until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. When they had sung a hymn, They went out to the Mount of Olives.

And Jesus said to them, You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.

[2 : 16] But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee. Peter answered him, Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.

Jesus said to him, Truly I tell you, This very night, Before the cock crows, You will deny me three times. Peter said to him, Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you.

And all the disciples said the same. Then Jesus went with them To a place called Gethsemane.

And he said to his disciples, Sit here while I go over there and pray.

Taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to be sorrowful And troubled. And he said to them, My soul is very sorrowful, Even to death.

Remain here and watch with me. Going a little further, He fell on his face and prayed, Saying, My father, If it be possible, Let this cup pass from me.

[3 : 25] Nevertheless, Not as I will, But as you will. And he came to the disciples And found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, So, Could you not watch with me one hour?

Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, But the flesh is weak. Again for the second time, He went away and prayed, My father, If this cannot pass unless I drink it, Your will be done.

And again he came and found them sleeping, For their eyes were heavy. So, Leaving them again, He went away and prayed for a third time, Saying the same words again.

And he came to the disciples and said to them, Sleep on and take your rest. See, The hour is at hand, And the Son of Man is betrayed into the hand.

And the hand of sinners. Amen. And may God bless to us his word. Well, if you would turn with me back to Matthew chapter 26.

[4 : 44] And a passage we read there together. Page 832 in the church Bibles. What we believe, That is, Our doctrine about the cross of Jesus Christ, Matters very greatly indeed.

Remember what Paul says to Timothy, As we studied it recently in 1 Timothy 2. It's the knowledge of the truth, That leads to salvation, He says. For there is one God, And one mediator between God and men.

The man Christ Jesus, Who gave himself as a ransom, For all. And that's the gospel that Timothy is to guard, And to pass on, And entrust to others, And those others, That are to keep teaching others, Who will keep preaching that saving truth of God.

And that truth must be guarded, Because Paul knows that falsehood will always arise, Even in apparently strong and healthy churches. As then, Just so today.

And there are many who would claim to be Christians, Evangelical, Even gospel people, But who repudiate this idea that, Jesus Christ died as a ransom, As a substitutionary atonement for sin.

[6 : 08] They say it's a morally dubious thing. They say this idea is a huge barrier to faith. Or that it's even tantamount to, As one famous leader said in a book not long ago, It's tantamount to cosmic child abuse.

Actually, since that book was written, It was about 10 years ago, That man's church in London has not only embraced homosexual marriage, But recently has embraced renaming ceremonies, For people transitioning their gender.

That's just a reminder, isn't it? That serious error in belief and behavior, Nearly always go together. And very often, That departure from the truth begins, When the cross of Jesus Christ, Becomes a stumbling block.

But of course, That has been so since the very beginning. To those who are perishing, Who are blind to the truth of God in Christ. And yet it is that message of a crucified Savior, Of one who gave himself as a ransom for us, In our place.

That alone saves sinners. That alone achieves real and effectual salvation, Rescue from the judgment of God for sins.

[7 : 30] So our doctrine of the cross really matters. In fact, It is quite literally crucial. And if, As some people want to say, The cross of Jesus is just a symbol of love, Or a vivid statement of the powerlessness of love, Then it doesn't do anything for sinners, Other than to say to them, Well, I feel your pain.

Or I share your weakness. Or I identify with you. But that's not what you want, Is it? From a surgeon. When your problem is a life-threatening tumor.

It's wonderful if your surgeon is full of empathy and feeling for you. It's not likely. Surgeons aren't really known for that. But what really matters in a surgeon, Is not what he feels for you, But what he can do for you.

Will he actually be able to remove that life-threatening tumor from your body? No good at making you feel better about yourself, Is it? If he doesn't actually do anything to remove. The cancer. And you see, It's the same, isn't it?

With Jesus' death on the cross. What matters fundamentally, Is not what Jesus' death teaches me, About love and faithfulness, And obedience to God, And love for others.

[8 : 43] Of course it teaches all of these things to me. Of course it sets for all of us, The supreme example of self-giving love. But none of that is of any value to me, If my greatest problem is not addressed.

Which is the infinite problem, Of my real, objective, Culpable guilt. Guilt before a holy God, Who can't look upon sin, And who therefore must condemn me, For my sin.

And for my rebellion against his rightful rule, Upon my life as my creator, As my Lord. And for my utter failure, To live up to his purpose for my creation, Which is to image him, To glorify him in this world.

Now what I need above all, Is not just a teacher, But a savior. I need someone to do for me, What I cannot do for myself, To reconcile me to God, The God that I am estranged from, Because of the objective, Terrible reality of my sin.

And unless there's that message in the gospel, There is actually no gospel, No good news for me, Or for anyone else. And that's why it's so important for us, To see that this gospel, Which is the historic gospel, Of the Christian church, About the cross of Jesus Christ, That it is not, Some arbitrary interpretation, About the atonement, Made up by one branch of the church, At one stage in

history, And therefore no better than any of the other, So called theories, Of the cross of Jesus.
[10:20] No, no, no. This is the theology, It is the interpretation, Placed upon the cross, By the Bible itself, And by the Lord Jesus himself, And by the Lord Jesus himself, And we saw last time, Didn't we?

So clearly, How Matthew shows, Jesus himself, Interpreting his own death, To his disciples, In this chapter. And it is unmistakably, Presented to us, As a death, Which is a prophesied, Sacrificial death, As the ultimate Passover, That delivers God's people at last, Into their true destiny, In the Father's kingdom, And does so, Through the blood, Of the Passover lamb, Through the blood, Of deliverance from bondage, Through the blood, Of the new covenant, That at last, Achieves real peace, And real forgiveness, Look at verse 28 again, This is my blood, Of the covenant, Says Jesus, Which is poured out, For many, For, For the forgiveness, Of sins, But Matthew wants us, To see Jesus, Showing us even more, He is showing us, How that forgiveness, Is going to be achieved,

And how all these many, Prophetic scriptures, Of the Old Testament, Actually become real, In history, And become real, In our experience, Forever, To borrow Paul's words, From 2nd Corinthians 5, Matthew is showing us, Vividly, That in Christ, God was, Actually, Reconciling the world, To himself, That he made him, Jesus, To be, Sin, Who had no sin, So that in him, We might become, The righteousness of God, That is, He's telling us, That Christ's death, Was a real work, Of God, For us, And the concept, Of substitution, Of Jesus, As the sin bearer, For his people, It runs, All through, Matthew's gospel, The great, Whole priority, Of his book, Is telling us, That sin, At last, Is actually, Being dealt with, By God, In answer to, All the promises, And the prophecies, Of the Old Testament, So I, Before even Jesus' birth, Right back in Matthew, Chapter 1, We're told by the angel, That he will be called, Jesus, Hoshea, Meaning the Lord saves, Because he will, Save his people, From their sins, And at the outset, Of Jesus' public ministry, Matthew shows us, Jesus being baptized, Among the sinners, In the place of sinners, To signify that, He stands in our place, To bear, The sins of many, And then as soon as, Jesus is named, The Messiah, By Peter, The Christ, Remember in Matthew, Chapter 16, Immediately, Jesus starts to speak, Repeatedly, About his coming suffering, As the servant of God, Promised by Isaiah, Who would be wounded, For our, Transgressions, And now here, Just prior to his death, Once again, He is utterly clear, As we see in verse 28, That the very heart, Of his mission, Is the forgiveness, Of sins, And it is at the cross, That it will all be accomplished, Through the shedding, Of his blood, Jesus himself, Is absolutely determined, That his disciples, Will understand, What the cross, Really does mean, Because if they don't, They will thereafter, Have no gospel to preach, This is where Peter, And all the other apostles, Got their theology of the cross, Their gospel, And this is where we also, Must get our, Doctrine of the cross, Otherwise we will have, No gospel to preach, No true gospel, No gospel with power, To save, To transform, To truly deliver, Into the life of the kingdom, So however much, Some people today, Might object, To Jesus' death, As a substitutionary death, For sins, As a death, Where he actually, Bore the penalty of sins, For his people, By suffering, The wrath of God, In his own person, Through his own death, However much,

[14:43] Some might balk at that, I want us to see, That this is precisely, What Jesus himself, Is teaching his disciple, By the very way, He orchestrates, The events, Of his last hours, With them, And that this is, Exactly what Matthew, Is at pains to highlight, In his presentation, Of these things, In Matthew 26, He is telling us, Not only is, Is Jesus' death, On the cross, A prophesied, Sacrificial death, Fulfilling the ultimate, Passover, He is telling us, It achieved that, Because it was, A purposeful, Substitutionary death, For sins, Matthew is proclaiming here, Unmistakably, That the cross of Jesus Christ, Was a purposeful, Substitutionary, Atonement, For sin, And he makes that so clear, Just by the way, He records, These dramatic events, Putting side by side, These two, Last, Vital experiences, Of the Lord Jesus, That he has, With his closest disciples,

Notice that, Verse 18, I will eat the Passover, With, My disciples, And then verse 36, Jesus went, With them, With his disciples, To a place, Called Gethsemane, And each of these, Shared experiences, With his disciples, Involved a cup, That must be drunk, Do you see?

In the upper room, Verse 28, Speaks of a wonderful, Cup of forgiveness, For the many, But in the garden, Of Gethsemane, Verse 39, Do you see? Another cup, Is to the fore, A terrible cup, Of forsakenness, And this cup, Will be drunk, By Jesus alone, See, It's a story, Told in two cups, A cup of forgiveness, And a cup, Of forsakenness, And that's what, Jesus death, Is all about, Let's think first, About this cup, Of forgiveness, The last supper, Proclaims so vividly, That Jesus death, Does

something wonderful, For the many, Verse 28, It works, Forgiveness, Despite all, The unfaithfulness, And the wickedness, Of the human heart, This is my blood, Poured out, For the forgiveness, Of sins, And my, Oh my, Are those sins, Not great, And terrible, Did you notice, As we read, The chapter, That both, The last supper, And the events, Of Gethsemane, They're preceded, Aren't they, By a reminder, Of the awful, Unfaithfulness, Of human beings, Even of Jesus, Closest disciples, Represented by Judas, And Peter, Quite deliberate, We're meant to notice it, Look at verses 20, To 25, Before the supper, It's Judas, To the fore, Isn't it?

And his betrayal, And then in verses 31, To 35, It's Peter, And his coming denial, That's to the fore, As they go to Gethsemane, Indeed, All the disciples, We're reminded, Are going to fall away, Because of him, Now Judas, Flags up for us, Doesn't he?

[17:45] The perversity, The sheer, Willful rebellion, Against God, That is the very heart of sin, Look at verse 23, The son of God, Is betrayed, By one who shares, His very food with him, It's the epitome, Of betrayal, Four times, In that little paragraph, That word betrayal, Dominates it, But the truth is, That every human being, Has been a betrayer, Since the very beginning, Of humanity, Adam, Created for intimacy, With God, To love God, Betray that love, And that trust, Right at the beginning, And now here we are, At the end of the story, The climax, Of history, And we have the leaders, The priests, The people, The Romans, Everybody, Even Christ's own disciples, All betray, The son of God, Here on earth, You see verse 22, All the disciples say, Is it I, Could it be me, And in a very real sense, The answer is yes, You're all betrayers,

You're all perverse rebels, Against God, Therefore you are all, Unable, To share in the great fellowship, With God, That verse 29, Speaks about there, Sharing with his, At his table, In the kingdom, You're excluded, From the joy, Of God's presence, Unless, There can be real, And radical, Forgiveness, Because that kind of betrayal, That kind of rebellion, Has a penalty, And that penalty, Is banishment, From the presence of God, Disobedience, Will bring death, Is what God said to Adam, Right at the beginning, And it did, Yes, Death is physical, Bodily death, But far worse than that, Death is utter exclusion, From God's presence, Remember the gate, Of the garden was shut, The flaming sword is there, There's no way back, And that's the real problem, Of human beings, Who have betrayed their maker, It's an objective problem, Of God's making, Not just the subjective experience, That we have, It's the penalty of sin, And the way back to God, Is impossible, Without, Without that objective problem, Being dealt with, And only God, Can possibly deal with it, But there is, A way back, To fellowship with God, Again says Jesus, Through real, Forgiveness, For undeserving, Perverse human beings, Verse 28, Through the blood, Of the covenant, Poured out, For the forgiveness, Of sins, Through the blood, Of the Passover lamb, It's real, It's objective, And it's something, That God does, In the death, Of Jesus Christ, And therefore, Offers two sinners, Through the death, Of Jesus Christ, Drink this cup, He says, It's for, The forgiveness, Of your sins,

Notice it's not something, That sinful people do, It's something, They receive, It's something, Jesus gives, And we receive, From him, There's obviously, Nothing mysterious, Or magic at all, Is there in this bread, And wine, It's perfectly obvious, That Jesus is not saying, To his disciples, This is my actual, Body and blood, His actual body and blood, Is sitting right in front of them, And speaking to them, There's not a hint, Not a shred, Of the bizarre idea, That makes the supper, A saving thing in itself, That idea in Roman Catholicism, Is utterly confused, Utterly corrupt, So let's be very, Very clear about this, Very important, Jesus' work on the cross, Does not point, To the table, And to the supper, And say, That is the real place, Of forgiveness, For sin, That is where the real, Transaction happens, Absolutely the reverse, Of that, Isn't it?

He's utterly plain here, He's saying, This table, And this supper, Points to my cross, And to the great, Once and for all event, That saves us, It proclaims the cross, And it assures, That what happens, On the cross, Is real, And Jesus is saying here, That real forgiveness, Cannot come about, Any other way, Not from within ourselves, Not from us just, Imitating Jesus' life, And Jesus' love, But only, By receiving, From God alone, That forgiveness, That comes, Through Jesus, And as the fruit, Of his, Death, As an atonement, For sin, Must become ours, Personally, Yes, We must drink, The cup that he gives, He says, But it can only be given, To anyone, By him, And that's what it means, That Jesus came, To save his people, From their sins, To be a real saviour,

[22:50] Not a saviour, From poverty, Or from loneliness, Or from low self-esteem, Or from anything else, No subjective feeling, That we have, But a saviour, From real sins, And that's every

single person, As the greatest need, According to Jesus, Because as he said, All through his ministry, The kingdom of God, Is dawning, And that means, That God, Is going to judge, And remake, This whole world, Yes, This is the great, Awaited salvation, All the prophets long for, But also, That means, Doesn't it, It's the day of God's wrath, Of his anger, And just punishment, Against sin, And all his enemies, That's why, John the Baptist's ministry, Began with these words, Flee from the wrath to come, That's why, Jesus' message, His first words, Were repent, Because the kingdom of God, Is upon us, And without forgiveness, On that day, Well what Judas, What Jesus says to Judas, Here in verse 24, That will be true,

Of every single person, Better never to have been born, Than to face the wrath, Of a righteous God, Why? Well because, Sin against an infinite God, Has an infinite penalty, And that is the horror, Of separation from God, And from everything, That is good, And joyful, And wonderful, Separation from that forever, And what Jesus himself, All through the gospel, Calls the place of weeping, The place of gnashing of teeth, The punishment of eternal fire, Jesus' words, But the glory of the gospel, You see, Is that he is saying, There is a way of escape, A great deliverance, From that terrible judgment, And into the glorious new covenant, Of fellowship with God forever, Into the reality, That verse 29 speaks of here, Rejoicing forever, In the home, Of the father in heaven, But only through, The cup of forgiveness, Found in Jesus' death, For many, For all who will drink his cup, And make that promise their own, But you might ask, And you'd be right, To ask, How can, Faithless betrayers, Receive full and free forgiveness, From God like that, How could God be just, If he just, Wipes sin away like that, As though it didn't matter, Surely, Justice demands, That there should be punishment, For terrible sins and crimes, Now we know that, Don't we, None of us are perfect, But we all have our right sense, Of outrage, When a criminal gets away, With terrible crimes, Because real justice demands, Real punishment, And surely a just God, Must demand that all the more so, What about that?

Well that's right, And he does, Sin must be punished, And sin is punished, And that's what Jesus, Is showing us here, In this second cup, Which must be drunk, And is drunk, By Jesus alone, The utterly faithful one, For his people, For a people who are not faithful, And can't be faithful, Even the very best of them, And that's what verses 31 to 45, Are all about here, The cup of forsakenness, What we see in the garden of Gethsemane, Is the other side, Of the story of the upper room, With its wonderful cup of forgiveness, Here is a cup of sheer, And utter horror, A cup that speaks of the death, Of the one, In the place of the many, A cup of death for sins, Of penalty for sins, Full of such sheer dread, That Jesus pleads for this cup, Three times,

To be taken away from him, Let this cup pass from me, He says, If there's any other way possible, This is, A cup of utter forsakenness, And only that makes any sense at all, Of the sheer agony of the Lord Jesus, In the garden here, His sorrow is so terrible, Verse 38, He's nearly sorrowful unto death, It nearly kills him, Verse 39, It prostrates him, Just to be thinking, About what awaits him, He fell on his face, It can't possibly be, The mere physical death, That Jesus feared, Because when that came, As we know, With all the pain, He was calm, He was silent, And many martyrs, Have faced death, Haven't they, With great bravery, Unmoved, No, no, no, This, Was death, As no other, A death of untold horror, As the wages of human sin, As all, Our sins, Were laid upon him, [27 : 51] That, Is what brought horror to Jesus, And that's what the scriptures foretold, True atonement, Must be by substitution, Because judgment, Is demanded for sin, Punishment must, Be meted out, And every sacrifice, For sin in the old testament, Was full of all of that kind of symbolism, The great day of atonement, In Leviticus 16, Encapsulates it all, Remember there were two goats, Slain, One goat, Was slain, And its blood was sprinkled, On the covering of the ark of the covenant, Holding God's immutable law, To make it the mercy seat, To say that the penalty of sin, Has been paid on behalf of the people, But there was a second goat, And after the hands of the priest, Were laid upon it, To symbolically place, All the sins of the people, On that goat, It was driven out, Far away, Into the deep dark wilderness, To signify the removal of sins,

And of sinners, Into the desolate wasteland, Far away, From the presence of God, And Jesus knew, That his coming death, Was the fulfillment of all, That these things prophesied, His was the real thing, At last, He was the servant of the Lord, That we read of in Isaiah, Who would be wounded, For our transgressions, Who would be crushed, For our iniquities, Because, Isaiah says, It was God's will, To crush him, When his soul, Makes an offering for sin, And that's why Jesus was, So full of agony, And sorrow in the garden, He knew, More than anyone on earth, Ever knew, He knew, What that meant, He knew, The burning intensity, Of God against sin, The prophets spoke often, Of

that terrible cup of wrath, You can read about it, In Isaiah 51,
Or in Jeremiah 25, Or Ezekiel 23, And see how horrible it is, And Jesus knew, That this cup, Was
for him, Because the son of man, He says in verse 24, Goes as it is written of him, And he knew,
That it meant, Utter forsakenness, He knew that it meant, Being separate, Cut off from his father,
As he became sin, For his people, That word in verse 37, Sorrowful and troubled, It means intense
agony, And one scholar says, That the word's root meaning is, To be far away from whom, To be
utterly desolate, He is talking of the cup, Of utter forsakenness, A cup of utter abandonment, A cup
of hell itself, That's what awaits Jesus, He was to be the, Ultimate scapegoat, To bear away sins,
Far away forever, Into the desolate wilderness, Separate utterly, From the presence of God,
And that is the cup, That Jesus Christ, Must drink, And drink alone, So that, We, Might drink a cup
of forgiveness, For many, He must drink our cup, Unfaithfulness and betrayal, So that we, May
drink his cup, Of faithful obedience, And even here, We see so starkly, The contrast of, Of the
disciples, Utter unfaithfulness and betrayal, And Jesus, Complete faithful obedience, To his father,
This time it's Peter to the fore, Representing them all, Verse 33, He's full of bravado, Full of
promises to stand, I'll never fail you, He blurts out, But again, They're all, Every one of them, Found
wanting, And that reminds us, Doesn't it, That sin is not just the negative, It's not just, The perversity
and rebellion, In our heart, That demands punishment, No, God's, God's law isn't first of all,
A penal sanction for disobedience, First and foremost, God's law is instruction, To show man, How
to live, As God's beautiful image, To show him, To show him, The way of faithfulness, And
obedience, To show him, How to be, The image of God's glory, In this world, But the truth is, That
even at our very best, When we want, To do that, We fall so woefully short, That's the reality, Isn't
it?

[32 : 23] Even our best, Own intentions, Are beyond us, So even when we become, Convicted of
our own sin, And rebellion, And we want to change, And we want to go back, And we want to obey
God, That we find we can't, We can't undo the past, Nor can we be, What we're meant to be, Even
if we want to, And so it is, With the disciples here, You see, They all, Betray the Lord Jesus Christ,
Not, Not with wickedness, Like Judas did, But just through utter weakness, They mean well, But
they utterly fail him, See how Matthew makes, That contrast so obvious, Look at verse 34, Three
times, You'll betray me Peter, Yes you will, And in verses 44 and 45, Three times, All the disciples
fail Jesus, Don't they, They fall asleep, Three times, When all he asks, Is that they pray with him,
While three times, Jesus, Bearing all the sins of the world, Facing the terrible darkness,

The agony of utter distress, Three times, He prays, Not my will, But thy will be done, You see verse
39, Let this cup pass from me, Yet not as I will, As you will, In verse 42, My father, If this cannot
pass, Unless I drink it, Your will be done, And verse 44, The third time, The same words, They
couldn't do, The one thing, Jesus asked, Of them, In his hour of great need, Just like in another
garden, Adam couldn't do, The one thing, That God said, Just one tree, To leave alone, One thing,
For me, But in this garden, Not like Adam and Eve, With the mutual fellowship, And company they
had, And the fellowship with God himself, And surrounded by, By such bounty, But alone, And in
agony, And with all the forces, Of hell itself, Tempting him, To weakness, In his human flesh, So
that he was nearly,

Tortured to death, Pressing him, To take an easier way, To turn his back, On the cross, To seek
glory, Without all of that, There, In that maelstrom, This man, The last Adam, The true man, Is
utterly faithful, The cup set before him, A terrible cup of wrath, As punishment for sin, He, Grasps
obediently, Faithfully, With both hands, So that he might, Set his cup before us, A wonderful cup of
forgiveness, In his blood, Which comes only through, That utter faithfulness of him, Right to the
end, To do the will, Of his father in heaven, You see the completeness, Of this double exchange,
That Matthew is setting, Right in front of us, So vividly, There's a negative side, He bears our
punishment, As a penalty for sin, Our cup, And there's the positive side,
His perfect obedience, Fulfills all, All God's, Positive requirements for man, As man, As God's true
image bearer, We drink his cup, All that is ours, Becomes his, All that is his, Becomes ours, Bearing
shame, And scoffing rude, In my place, Condemned, He stood, Seals my pardon, With his blood,
That's the negative, And the positive, Guilty, Vile, And helpless we, But spotless lamb of God, Was
he, Full atonement, Can it be?

Yes, His cup is yours, Because, Your cup, Became his, And so we can sing, Hallelujah, What a
savior, Hebrews chapter 5, Says this, Jesus offered up, Prayers and supplications, With loud cries,
And tears, To him who was able, To save him from death, And he was heard, Because of his

reverence, Although he was a son, He learned obedience, He learned the sheer cost, Of what that meant, By what he suffered, And being made complete, He became the source, Of salvation, For all, Who obey him, All who drink, His cup of forgiveness, And receive, His offering, Of faithfulness, Can you see, How clearly, Matthew is showing us, So vividly, Jesus himself, Explaining, What his death, Is all about, As a sacrificial death,

[37 : 04] Long promised, Now achieved, The ultimate Passover, Delivering from bondage, And into eternal destiny, As the people of God, Forever, And as a substitutionary death, Purposed by God, But completed, At Calvary, And that alone, Is why it is, A saving death, Only thus, Can God, Be God, Holy, And just, And pure, And yet, As Paul says, Be the justifier, Of the one, Who has faith, In Jesus, Through Jesus, And only, Only through his death, We receive, Reconciliation, Says Paul, God did, The redeeming work, In the death, Of Jesus Christ, On the cross, He really did, Take our cup, And drink it to the dregs, And so he offers, That great reconciliation, To us, He holds out to us, His cup, Of forgiveness, In his blood, And that is the very heart, Of the biblical gospel, The gospel of grace, Without that great exchange, There is no glorious evangel, There is no good news, Without that, We are still in our sins, And under the judgment of God, But with it, There is reconciliation, Full and free, To the father's house, And to the rejoicing, In his table, So friends, What does that mean, For you and me today?

Well, First, Matthew's message, Is a very sobering, Reality check, Isn't it? Because it, When it comes, To ensuring, That we get right, With God, That we stay right, With him, That we are faithful, To him, And what Matthew's, Message is to us, So plainly, Is we just cannot, Trust ourselves, Can we?

Because the honest truth, Is that like all the disciples, We're all betrayers, We may think, That we've never, Stooped to the wickedness, Of a Judas, But perhaps some of us, May know that we have, But who of us, Can possibly think, That we could outstrip, The disciples, Peter and all the rest, Haven't, Haven't we also, Let Jesus down?

Even the best of us have, And we'll do it again, Verse 41, Is so true, Isn't it? The spirit is willing, But the flesh is so weak, And so friends, We must be real, We can't, Trust ourselves, And unless you swallow, That truth, Unless you're honest, About yourself, You are hiding, In a make believe world, Just like Peter and Judas, You can't, Trust yourself, But you can, Trust the Lord Jesus Christ, That's the wonderful message, Shining out of this chapter to us, Surrounded by betrayal, Surrounded, By the wickedness, And the weakness, Of humanity, Jesus Christ, Is faithful, To the last, He will not, Betray his father, He will not, Betray his calling, He will not, Betray his people, Those he came to save, And that means,

[40 : 26] He'll never betray you, Or me, If we trust in him, And we can, Trust in him, He's committed to us, He is faithful, You can trust, Jesus Christ, Never, Never, To let you down, You can trust Jesus, For your past, Whatever your betrayal, Whether it's through weakness, Or through outright wickedness, His cup is for you, So that your cup, Is, For him, Forever, My saviour, My saviour, My saviour, My saviour, My saviour, My saviour, Obedience and blood, Hides all my transgressions, From view, You can trust Jesus Christ, For your past, And you can trust Jesus, For your present, He's committed to you now, He will never let you go, Yes, You will still disappoint him, But he is the faithful one, Who will never fail you, Eternity, Will not erase your name, From the palms, Of his hands, Do you notice in verses 32 and 33 there,

Even as Jesus is telling them, About their total desertion of him, He is immediately promising to them, He will be going ahead of them, Into Galilee, And even in the midst of your stumblings, And failures, And mine, He is committed to us, He is committed, To giving us his cup, And taking our cup, You can trust Jesus today, Whatever your situation may be, And you can trust, The Lord Jesus Christ, For your future, If you've drunk his cup of forgiveness, Now Jesus is plain, You will drink, That cup of joy, In the Father's presence, That's his promise in verse 29, However dark your experience, However forsaken, You might feel at times, And however you might fear, That it will be that, At the end of your life, In the darkness of death, It cannot be, It will not be, No, He, He was forsaken, So that you and I, Need never ever, Ever be forsaken, You can trust, You can trust, Jesus Christ, Right to the end, And right at the end, Of your life, Because, He tasted, That cup of bitter, Forsakenness, So that you and I, Might sup forever, That cup of bountiful forgiveness, This, Is, Is, Is, Is, Is the gospel of Christ, And thanks be to God, Amen, Let's pray, grant we beseech the almighty God that we for our evil deeds do worthily desire to be punished by the comfort of thy grace may be mercifully relieved through our Lord Jesus Christ in whose name we pray

Amen