

Session 3 Encountering God’s Glory in the Face of Betrayal (Jn. 16:2)

“Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)

I. REVIEW: THE APOSTOLIC VIEW OF PERSECUTION

This is session 3 of my course, “Intimacy with the Trinity in John 16,” with Stuart Greaves We are doing six 15-part series on John 13-17. This is session 3 of this current 15-part series. This is my third message in a row on persecution. Someone asked, “Is persecution your new message?”

I said, “No, it is just the next verses that I am covering, going verse by verse through John 15 and 16. I am going in order.” And so, the last 10 verses of John 15, verses 18-27, address persecution and the first four verse in John 16 address persecution, so when we go verse by verse, that is how it works. I love expository preaching. Next week is 16:5-7, which is on the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and then after that we will cover 16:8-11 which is about conviction of sin in the Church especially as seen in historic revivals. Those are the next subjects that we will cover in John 16.

Roman numeral one: I am going to give a brief review of some of the material I covered in Session 2 in this series last week. I believe it is good to hear some of this over and over. My goal is to equip you so that you can say these truths to younger believers. The biblical mandate is to disciple the next generation of those who are in our midst. Thus, we want to get prepared to prepare others. This biblical mandate is for all of us, no matter what age you are.

- A. Persecution is both a demonic attack to hinder our spiritual growth and a divine gift to enhance it. God “granted” that His people be persecuted (Phil. 1:29) so they may be transformed in context to it for their benefit in this age (Dan. 11:35; Rom. 5:3-5; 1 Pet. 4:1) and the age to come (2 Cor. 4:17).

²⁹For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ...to suffer for His sake... (Phil. 1:29)

¹⁷...affliction...is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 Cor. 4:17)

Paragraph A: Persecution is both a demonic attack to hinder our spiritual growth and also a divine gift to enhance our spiritual growth. The Church in the West has focused on the demonic attack, and I think that is appropriate. However, we are too shallow in our understanding of the divine gift part of persecution.

- B. The Lord uses persecution to transform His people and cause them to cease from sin (1 Pet.4:1). Peter assured believers that the spirit of glory will rest on those who are persecuted (1 Pet. 4:14).

¹...he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ²that he no longer should live...for the lusts of men...¹⁴If you are reproached...the Spirit of glory...rests on you... (1 Pet. 4:1-2, 14)

Paragraph B: Peter tells us that when we are persecuted—he used the word, “reproached,” but he means “attacked”—because of Christ (4:14), then “the Spirit of glory will rest on you.” In other words, there will be a greater activity of the Holy Spirit in the lives of people who are being persecuted or reproached for being loyal to Jesus.

Because we are not encountering much persecution in the West, maybe a little bit of ridicule, particularly in the last two or three years, and some of the cancel/censor type of stuff with technology, a little bit of economic penalties, and we see that on the horizon, but not really heavy stuff, so we do not know much about the Spirit of glory. Thus, when we think about future persecution, we typically are thinking, “Oh no! Oh no!” But if the apostles were here, I think they

might say, "Well, you might be surprised as there might be something better going on that you did not expect in terms of the tenderizing of the Holy Spirit, etc."

- C. Jesus prepared His disciples to be persecuted (Jn. 15:18-16:4) so that they would not stumble or fall away (Jn. 16:1). In John 16:2, Jesus highlighted the most costly and painful type of persecution—*betrayal*—because it comes from those that we are in a familiar relationship with.

¹***"These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble [fall away]."***

²***They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service...⁴remember that I told you [these things]."* (Jn. 16:1-4)**

Paragraph C: We looked at John 16:1-4 in our last session, and I just want to make a point or two zeroing in on verse 2 to really develop that. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you," in verse 1, and He means the last seven or eight verses of John 15. He said, in effect, "I have spoken to you these things about persecution, and the reason is to prepare you so you will not be offended, shocked and afraid so that you stumble." With the word, "stumble" here, He is talking about falling away from the faith. He is not talking about having a rough night or a rough weekend or that kind of thing. He is saying, in other words, "I want to inform you and prepare you so that you are braced and in this conversation with Me, so you do not stumble and so that you do not get offended and filled with fear when persecution really does come your way."

Verse 2 is the verse I really want to zero in on. I consider verse 2 to be the most costly and painful type of persecution that there is. Jesus goes right to the top, to the most intense kind. At first you do not get it because as Gentiles we do not really grasp the implications of what He is telling these Jewish apostles. He said in verse 2, "They are going to kick you out of the synagogues," and, "Yes, the time is coming when whoever kills you will think they are serving God." That is, it is going to be people who are seeking God, and they see themselves as Bible-believing people, but they are the ones who are going to kick you out and kill you. This is really an intense statement. He continues in verse 14, saying, "I want you to remember these things." He repeats this idea of remembering a couple of times. Again, I mentioned that in the last session. The reason He wants them to remember is because He wants them to be prepared for what will happen and why it is happening, and for what God is doing and what the benefits are because that is the way that we are going to be prepared.

I have written here regarding John 16:2 that Jesus highlights the most costly and the most painful type of persecution, which is betrayal. Betrayal is most painful because it comes from people that you are in a familiar relationship with. You cannot be betrayed by a stranger. You could be mistreated and attacked, but not betrayed because you do not have a common history. You have never put your guard down, and your heart is not open to them because you do not even know them. Betrayal is not just the most painful and costly type of persecution—here is the good news—it is the most transformative type of persecution. Meaning, when we are betrayed, the pain touches our heart at a deeper level than anything, and there is a desperation to touch God in the deepest place of our heart in order to have joy in the place where there is pain. We have to touch God desperately. We cannot be playing around with God and have joy in the place of betrayal. It takes real reality in the Holy Spirit, and so when we are persecuted with betrayal, we go deeper in God if we are going to go on that journey because we are desperate to get through to solutions to this.

Now a man, Brother Yun, which is his name and the name he goes by, wrote a book in 2002, called "The Heavenly Man." He came and visited us here at IHOPKC. He was a prominent leader in the Underground Church in China who suffered incredible persecution, I mean, he was beaten, his legs broken, and all of these horrible things, and he wrote about it in the book. The book became an international best seller. He came and visited us here for about a week. I was talking to him, and he was telling us these gruesome stories of the persecution of him and his friends. His real point was the

supernatural miracles and rescue and the power of God that was on him when it was happening. I was thinking "Wow! That is really something," but then he said the most surprising thing.

He said, "The persecution in the prison when they beat me with rods and they broke my legs and bones a couple of times over a few years was bad. However, by far the most painful persecution was when I got out of prison and I was betrayed by Christian leaders."

The book became really well-known and a number of Christian leaders—well, I do not know and I do not want to weigh in on who said what or whatever which became a controversy—some of the jealous ones were saying, "You are false! You are not right!" and they put out rumors about him.

He said, "That was twice as painful as getting hit with a rod!"

I said, "Come on! Not really. I mean somebody saying you are a liar was more painful?"

He said, "No, no, that pain was far worse than the beatings I had." That has always stuck with me because he was very, very adamant about that.

1. Betrayal is also the most transformative type of persecution—as we respond rightly to God.
 2. The pain of betrayal touches our hearts at a very deep level. We become desperate to touch God in the deepest places of our heart in order to have His peace in the face of this pain.
- D. **You should not stumble** [*fall away*]: Our greatest danger is not being persecuted but falling away. The ultimate spiritual failure of denying Jesus is far worse than physical harm. The Greek verb, "stumble," (*skandalizmao*) refers to falling from the faith—*fall away* (RSV), *go stray* (NIV).
- E. **Remember**: Jesus emphasized the importance that His people *remember* (15:20; 16:4) that persecution was sure to come to all nations (Mt. 24:9), and to *remember* why God allows it, what benefits result to His people from it, and what God promised to do as He intervenes to help us.

Paragraph E: We are going back to this word, "I am telling you these things." He said this twice, "I am telling you this so that you will remember." He said it in John 16:4, but just a few verses earlier in John 15:20 He had said it again, "I want you to remember." So Jesus was emphasizing the importance that people remember. He wanted them to know that persecution was coming to all nations. You see it in the verse there, Matthew 24:9. He said that on Tuesday. Here in John 16, it is Thursday at the Last Supper, and He was saying, as it were, "I told you two days ago that persecution is not coming to only a few nations. There is coming a time it will come to every single nation; I want you to know that!" Okay. He said, "I want you to know why persecution is coming and why God is allowing it. I want you to know what the benefits of persecution are for you. I want you to know what God promises to do for you and through you in persecution. You have to remember because you have to have understanding of the biblical narrative so then you will not draw back in fear. You will have a lot more confidence before the Lord even as you are anticipating it."

Now, because in the Church in the West we have had so little persecution, we do not remember these things because we never learned them. I am not saying that negatively because the Lord is waking up the Church in the West right now. However, my passion is to train the next generation of young people so they know why persecution is happening and what the benefits are, what God's commitments are to His people, why He is allowing persecution, and why it has such a prominent place in end-time prophecy.

- F. Persecution has a prominent place in end-time prophecy. It is part of God's plan together with a great outpouring of the Spirit to transform the Church, rescuing it from a spirit of compromise and spiritual boredom and preparing it to be anointed to usher in "a billion-soul harvest" (Rev. 7:9).

God is allowing persecution to have a major place in end-time prophecy because it is going to be used by God as He transforms the end-time Church in a major way. Jesus is going to free, heal, and deliver the end-time Church from a "Laodicean spirit of compromise"—hundreds of millions of believers who are stuck in a spirit of compromise and spiritual boredom. Jesus has a clear plan and promise to heal and rescue the end-time Church from compromise and spiritual lethargy, then use it as He releases great power through them to bring in the billion-soul harvest. The revived, restored end-time Church will be equipped to train "the billion-soul harvest" to walk out New Testament Christianity. Thus Jesus will come back for a mature Bride (Rev. 19:7).

So Jesus is using persecution plus the outpouring of the Spirit in order to rescue His beloved Church worldwide and get them ready to bring in the great harvest with signs and wonders that will be beyond anything ever seen in history. In other words, the end-time Church will be established in kingdom values and will have a vibrant connection to Jesus relationally so they will literally walk as a mature Bride and will disciple the billion-soul harvest accordingly. And of course, we say "the billion-soul harvest" which is just a generic number, meaning it is hundreds of millions plus (not just a little revival in a few places).

Again, Jesus called us to "remember" (Jn. 16:4) the biblical narrative about persecution. That means we ought to have family discussions about it. Just the other day my wife and I were talking about some of these subjects and asking how far would we go in our faithfulness to Jesus if our family were at risk. We were breaking down the details such as what would we do if all of our finances were at risk or what if...or what if? Those conversations are critical to have over and over because the more we talk about it, the more clarity we will get, and the more grace will come to our heart as well. We do not want to be surprised where suddenly in one moment we are confronted with a ultimatum that demands that we take a stand for Jesus that results in persecution. Will we draw back? By "remembering what Jesus said," we engage in kingdom conversation about it as a spiritual family, and also in our own natural families as well.

- G. Jesus prophesied two details about the persecution in order to prepare them to stand strong (16:2). He knew it would be shocking news that some would be excommunicated from their spiritual families or killed by religious leaders (Rev. 17) and not merely by secular governments (Rev. 13) punishing them for crimes against the state (in refusing atheistic polices) or hate crimes in society.

Paragraph G: Jesus prophesied, in John 16:2, about being kicked out of the synagogues and being killed by people who think they are serving God. He wanted them to know this because it is the most intense type of persecution. This would have been shocking to the apostles undoubtedly because they had never thought of being kicked out of the synagogue they grew up in simply because of loving the Messiah. They were probably perplexed about this, wondering, "Why would we get kicked out of the synagogue for loving the Messiah?"

*Remember that to be excommunicated or kicked out of the synagogue was to be driven out of their spiritual family, the group of people that they had a long history with, and from a people with a similar religious background as they—a similar religious heritage in believing the Bible. Most Jewish families lived in small towns and villages, and the synagogues were small. Families were in them together for decades and decades and decades, and everyone knew everyone. Then to be driven out by those people because you had a loyalty to the Messiah and His teachings, the apostles must have been thinking, "What do you mean? What **do** you mean? And then we are going to be killed by religious leaders who claim to have the same similar background in the Bible that we have? Why would they kill us?"*

Now, it would have been easier to understand if Jesus were talking about the secular government of Rome killing them, because that did happen. Rome did kill many of the persecuted believers in the first two centuries. The secular

government punishing you is one thing because they charge you with crimes against the state, saying you were not loyal to their policies, their atheistic policies, you did not worship the emperor at Rome, etc. You can understand that, but that is not what He is talking about here. I mean He does include that in other places, but here He said, "I am talking about your spiritual heritage. It is those people who are going to turn on you."

- H. **They will put you out of the synagogues:** Inclusion in the synagogue was very important since most of Israel's relational, social, economic, and spiritual life was deeply connected to the synagogue. Being censored from the synagogue or "shunned" left Jewish people in a very difficult position. It was painful to be "put out" of the community that their family had been in for generations.

Paragraph H: I said this a little bit in Session 2, so I do not want to spend too much time on it. However, inclusion in the synagogue was very important since most of Israel's relational, social, economic, and spiritual life was deeply connected to the synagogue. If you were kicked out of the synagogue, you did not have a job. If you were kicked out of the synagogue, you did not have friends. I mean you were shunned and completely isolated. We do not have that exact parallel in our world. If you get kicked out of one church, you can drive about a mile to the next church thinking, "Well, they do not even know me there. I will tell them my story." However, I believe that there will be parallels before this is over because, though Jesus is talking to the apostles, He is actually preparing the end-time Church with this John 13-17. It left them in a very difficult position to be shunned and kicked out of their spiritual heritage and their religious family, very, very painful.

- I. **Whoever kills you will think he offers God service:** End-time persecution will come from religious authorities (Rev. 17) as well as from the secular state (Rev. 13). Those who believe that they serve God when killing "Christian heretics" are more zealous and bold in pursuing them. The initial group that claimed to obey the God of the Bible by killing devout Christians was the Jewish Sanhedrin. Later the Catholic Inquisition (approx. AD 1200-1800) killed devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Now, radical Islam believers think that they serve God by killing Christians and Jews.

Paragraph I: Then He said, "Not only are they going to kick you out, and there will be economic consequences, your family will shame you when you get kicked out. They will not stand up for you because they do not want to get kicked out!" That is pretty intense. He goes on with, "It is going to be more intense. They are going to kill you, thinking they are serving God." The reason that is more intense is because there is a betrayal factor and because people who think they are serving God when they kill you are more zealous and bold in killing you because they think that God is pleased with them. In the initial persecutions of being killed by people who said they believed the God of the Bible, it was rabbinic Judaism; they were killing the early Church and the apostles.

Then, for the next many centuries, it was the institutional Church that was killing true believers, and they were killing the Jews as well. Now it is radical Islam and Jihadists thinking they are serving God by killing genuine believers in Jesus as well as the Jews. So, there is coming a time yet future where all three of those groups—radical rabbinic Judaism, institutional Christianity, and radical Islam—all three groups will be going after genuine believers of Jesus as well as the Jewish people, and it is going to get intense.

Know this: Satan wants to take you out. He wants to take you out of your divine purpose even before you get kicked out of the synagogue. Jesus could have told them that the trouble does not just start when they kick you out. Satan will try to offend you and get you betrayed, even if it is not on religious grounds. Satan is after destroying your purpose in God.

- J. On Tuesday, He prophesied that His disciples would be hated by people who would betray them—by those in a close relationship with them—including family members and friends (Mt. 24:10; Mk. 13:12; Lk. 21:16). When some get offended, they self-justify their betrayal as a work of justice.

⁸*All these are the beginning of sorrows. ⁹Then...you will be hated by all nations for My name...
¹⁰Then many will be offended, will betray...and hate one another...¹²lawlessness will abound... (Mt. 24:8-12)*

¹⁰*The gospel must first be preached to all the nations...¹²Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. (Mk. 13:10-12)*

¹⁶*"You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends..." (Lk. 21:16)*

Paragraph J: The enemy wants to harm those who believe in Jesus by the people who are offended at them and, therefore, betray them. Remember the context of Jesus' teaching John 13-17 was on Thursday night during the Last Supper, He died on Friday the next day. But two days earlier on Tuesday, He had given them such a very significant message about the end times that is recorded in three places: Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. It is the same message, though Mark 13 and Luke 21 supply a few details that are not recorded in Matthew 24. That is, Luke 21 added a few more details, and Mark 13 also adds a few more details, but it is the same message that was given at the same time on Tuesday just before the Last Supper on Thursday (Jn. 13-17). So you need to read all three chapters in order to get the whole story.

In Matthew 24:8, Jesus said, "All of these things are the beginning of birth pangs" or the beginning of sorrows; many translations say the birth pains or the birth pangs depending on the translation. And what He meant by this is—Matthew 24:4-8—wars, and rumors of wars, and earthquakes, pestilence. "These things" are the beginning of the birth pangs, but notice verse 9, "**Then,**" which means after that season of the beginning of birth pains. Right now, in my opinion, we are still in the season of the beginning of the birth pangs. We are still in that season right now, but there is a time coming where Jesus would say, "And after that" or "Then after that season that is the time when all nations will hate you."

Right now not all nations hate genuine believers of Jesus. Right now on the watchlists, which I mentioned in Session 2 and have quite a bit of notes on this, there are about 200 nations in the world or close to 200, and sixty of those nations are on the "Persecution Watchlist" which means that different ministries have said that these nations have severe and regular persecution in an ongoing basis. However, that means there are one hundred forty that are not on that watchlist. They may have a little bit of persecution like I mentioned, like some censoring of technology and social media, and some economic penalties are starting, but nothing really intense yet. We can see it arising, but it is not intense yet. But, there is a time, "then," after the beginning of the birth pangs. It is still a couple of years down the road when all nations—that is a big word, the word "all"—and the scope of the persecution will be global. There will not be an exception of a nation that does not do this. We are not there yet, and that is why I am stirred up because the Church in the West is in a bubble, and they are a bit asleep about this because they are thinking, "Well, on the internet we hear about some horrible persecution over there in those nations, but we are doing pretty good. You know, I will just kind of lay low and keep my mouth shut, be nice, and I think everything is going to be fine." No! No, it is going to escalate.

1. **Offended** (Mt. 24:10): Today many are getting angrier and more quickly offended, causing them to have less capacity to cope with pressure so they strike out and betray people more.

Matthew 24:10 describes the next thing that happens—once all nations are persecuting believers, meaning the scope is universal, it is global with persecution in every nation, then verse 10 takes a different twist, and we need to pay attention to verse 10 in order to catch it. He said, in effect, "Then, once it is global, there is another dimension that is going to come when many"—that means millions and millions—"will be offended, and they will betray one another and they will hate one another. This is another sub-unit of the persecution, many who are offended. And culture now is

such that so many people—and we all know it—in 2023 are getting angrier and angrier across the earth. The emotional bandwidth is getting overtaxed. People are getting less able to cope with pressure. They are striking out faster and harder, but it is not just striking out; they are betraying people which means those are familiar relationships, close ones, and not all of them are close but familiar at least. And that is when the offended people who will be offended at God as well, though I am talking about the culture. There is more violence emerging, and there is less patience with people in all walks of life. Jesus said, as it were, “When that kicks into a new gear, when lawlessness is breaking out at another level, just the anger level of families, of marriages, of parents and children, of churches, of businesses, even believers, their anger level will escalate. Their patience with one another will decrease. They will be offended, and they will strike out at each other.”

People get offended. Many self-justify their betrayal. They do not call it betrayal; they call it justice. When they get offended, their objectivity is clouded, and they think that when they are striking at somebody or paying someone back, it is justice. They do not have a grid for that being betrayal. Betrayal is not just when somebody turns you in to go to prison. Betrayal is when someone you are in close relationship with is undermining you, mostly behind your back, sometimes to your face, but mostly not, and a lot of times they are smiling towards your face, showing one face, but they are undermining you because they are offended at you. Inevitably you find out, and then what you do is what we are talking about. That is what this is about tonight because the Lord wants a people who understand what betrayal is about and how He is using it.

However, many believers I know, when they get offended, then they start zeroing in on somebody in order to take them out and to undermine them, to hurt that person's reputation, and to undermine their credibility. Again, they see it as justice. They are justice warriors, you know; they are doing what is right. In all my years of ministry I guarantee that those people will always find five or ten people to affirm them and pat them on the back, saying, “Good job, good job.” This thing is going to escalate in all of the cultures around the earth.

Well, Jesus gets a little more specific than “people will be betrayed by offended hearts and they will betray more and more people believers and unbelievers alike.” This is not only inside the Church. Luke 21—remember Luke 21 is the same message as Matthew 24—Luke adds another thing. He says, as it were, “Well, Matthew did not say it, but Jesus said. ‘You are going to be betrayed by your parents!’”

Can you imagine your parents turning you in, betraying you, undermining you, hurting your credibility, and trying to damage your life and reputation? Like, “What!” No, brothers, sisters, siblings, relatives, aunts, uncles and cousins will do it to each other! “Really?” I have seen a bit more of that in the last five or ten years. He said that friends will do it. People on the same worship team, on the same ministry team, in the same workplace, the same kingdom business, they will turn on each other.

Mark 13 is the same message as Matthew 24 and Luke 21. Mark gives a few details that Matthew did not say: Jesus said, “And when this season happens, this intensified betrayal, the gospel will be preached in all of the nations.” We know from other verses it will be preached in power. I like to use the number because lots of people use it, the “billion-soul” harvest, and again no one knows the number, but the point being hundreds of millions and not just a little revival here and a little revival over there, but it is a global revival outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

2. **Betray:** This includes undermining or harming a friend or family member by words or deeds. Betrayal includes seeking to gain money or other advantages by undermining others. Betrayal will intensify to include some aiding authorities leading to the death of a family member.

In the context of the end-time revival, brother will betray brother. Not just undermine, not just block their goals and undermine their credibility, but they will betray them to death. They will steal their business and even turn them in to the authorities to death. You are looking at that, so when the great revival happens, this is happening within the

culture, but remember the Lord is using the betrayal to bring people deep in God because He does have a solution for it. He does have grace for it. There is a spirit of glory that He will put on the heart. There is understanding, there is grace, and He will actually pour love into the genuine believers for the people who are betraying them. They will experience the love of God at a depth that they never did before. The Lord is using it, again, to get the Laodicean spirit off the Church in the end times to prepare them for the billion-soul harvest and to prepare the new believers together so that they would be a mature Bride for whom Jesus will come. He knows what He is doing, and He told us far in advance, but the body of Christ needs to start paying attention to this, talking about why, how, when, where, what will God do, how do I respond? Where is the conversation at with our family, our Church family, our spiritual family, etc.?

3. **The gospel to all nations** (Mk. 13:10): The most intense season of persecution and betrayal is in context to “the billion-soul harvest” (Rev. 7:9). God uses betrayal to lead His people into a deeper walk with Him. He releases the “spirit of glory” to empower us to love the people who betray us. This prepares the Church to disciple the end-time harvest to walk as a mature Bride.

The reason we need to know this is because the Lord has a pre-emptive plan to get the Church ready for this so we are growing in love while many in the culture are growing in offense and are betraying one another. We are understanding betrayal in a way that with our interaction with the Lord, which I will get to in a moment, we are actually experiencing the glory of God and the love of God more. We are being more transformed by it. We are not being sucked down the drain, so to speak, just lost in a torrent of confusion like the cultures are getting right now. The anger is getting much more intense now than it was five years ago but it is only beginning to escalate.

- K. *Not all persecution is betrayal; not all betrayal is persecution*—if it is rooted in offense, greed, fear. People betray for various reasons such as being **offended** by one’s spiritual convictions (Jn. 15:18), or by one’s success (jealousy), or feeling mistreated by them (revenge), or when concluding they have bad character (that needs to be exposed), or in seeking **personal gain** (money, honor, etc.), or in seeking **self-protection** (to distance themselves from controversy, stigma, and being censored).

Sometimes God’s servants are attacked because they are promoting some of the unpopular truths. They are standing for Jesus and are attacked because of their conviction, but remember in Matthew 24:10, Jesus said that many are going to be offended and are going to betray you, and it is not even about religious conviction. They are just angry at their life, and they see an opportunity to put you down and take something from you, so they will betray you.

Judas was not vindictive. He did not want Jesus harmed. He was not a violent man saying, “Hey! I am going to pay you back for mistreating me!” No, he was just saying, “I just want the money! Basically that is it! I do not want You to get hurt!” I am imagining Judas was thinking, “Jesus will pull out some miracles. He will win them over, and I will get my money! Nobody will ever know I got my money!” He was not trying to hurt Jesus. He was after the money.

- L. Many zealous Nazis betrayed their long-term Jewish friends and neighbors for money. Some betray out of fear i.e., the social credit score in China. Saul betrayed David out of jealousy. Absalom betrayed his father David out of selfish ambition to replace him as king. Ahithophel was a friend and leader in David’s royal court who betrayed David out of revenge (Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14).
- M. Jesus referenced the betrayal in Micah’s day when prophesying the betrayal in the end times (Mk. 13:12). Micah felt pain seeing friends or family members (7:5-6) betraying one another for money (7:3). He lamented the lack of godly leaders in the public square (7:2) and a multitude of wicked leaders—*princes* (government leaders), *judges* (court systems), and *the great men* (market place leaders, etc.)—who perverted justice for financial gain, asking for gifts, bribes, and “pay-offs.”

¹Woe is me!...²The faithful man has perished...every man hunts his brother with a net ³the prince asks for gifts, the judge seeks a bribe, and the great man utters his evil desire [he betrays for money]; so they scheme together. ⁵Do not trust in a friend...⁶For son dishonors father, daughter rises against her mother...a man's enemies are the men of his household. (Mic. 7:1-6)

Paragraph M: Let's look at Micah 7. Micah prophesied around 700 BC. He was about 300 years after King David, and the reason I say that is because King David was the model of how to respond to betrayal. David was the most betrayed man in terms of the amount of the description in the Bible of betrayal against any one man. In the Old Testament, it would be David. Unquestionably, he had more betrayals than anyone. However, Micah learned from David, and we will get there in a minute.

I highlight four different responses from Micah 7. The reason I am going to Micah 7 is because this is the passage where the prophet Micah said, "Brother against brother, father against son, son against parents!"

Jesus was saying, as it were, "I am going to tell you what Micah saw!" because what Micah saw was only a down payment of what he saw in his generation. This is going to be global, not just in his generation. So Jesus is actually referencing Micah 7, and the reason being is that we would go to Micah 7 is to see how we are supposed to respond because when Jesus points to a chapter like that, He will typically point to a verse while His message is, "Read the whole thing! There are about ten points I want you to get!"

Look Micah 7:1. We see that Micah is in pain because he is seeing family members betraying each other for money. This is really bothering him because money is the number one motive here. Micah the prophet says, "Woe is me!" Why? Why are you in pain? "The faithful man has perished!" He was godly and there were some godly people, but there was a lack of godly leaders in the public square. He said, as it were, "I do not see the godly leaders like there used to be" over business and government and all of the different parts of society.

1. **Hunts his brother with a net (7:2):** They entangle their prey via blackmail, threats, etc.

Look at verse 2. This is horrible! He said, "Every man is hunting his brother with a net." That is a terrible sentence because they hunted an animal with a net to entangle the animal so the animal could not get free. So he said basically, "Men are coming after one another with a net so they can entangle them!" That is, so that they could blackmail them or so they could say, "If you do this, then we are going to do that, and that is going to hurt you!" Maybe that is not blackmail. But their intent was, "We are going to hurt your business. We are going to hurt your reputation! You have to do it our way!" So many people in Micah's day were being entangled in the net where society was really under the pressure of this betrayal, and they all wanted money, which was their end game.

He says in verse 3, "The princes"—that means their political government—"they want financial gifts!" That is, if you want your thing to work, then give the government, the mayor, the governor, or the senator, give them money! And there is plenty of that already happening in the earth all throughout history, but it is really going to escalate.

He was saying, "The judge, the legal system, the guy wants money. Pay him, and he does not care how unjust his decision is, he will say what you want him to say." He referred to "the great man," and what he means by that is the man who has influence in society, the prominent marketplace man, the prominent technology guy, the man with influence.

That great man utters his evil desire which means it is a negotiation. "Give me money!" It is all about money here. It is all about his evil desire. Or, "If you do not give me money, I am going to censor you!" or "I am going to shut you down and support the other business and put you out of business."

Micah said that they all scheme together in this wicked scheme. Now, this was in Micah's day. Jesus is saying that this is what is coming but on a global level!

Now this is not an absolute statement: "Do not trust in any friend!" He is not saying to never trust anybody. That is not the point. In context he is saying, "Be careful because there is so much betrayal going on that it will go beyond the government officials and the judges and the legal system and the marketplace guys. It is going to then go to families!" Verse 6, look at it, "A son will dishonor his father, a daughter her mother. A man's enemies are the members of his own house" and it is all about payoffs and bribes, blackmail and money! And so now what does Micah say? How do you respond? We want to know Micah's response, and I am going to be ever so brief because they are pretty straight forward. Some of you will be able to take every one of these points and write things, make podcasts on them, and really develop them in the days to come. These are just a few little hints here.

2. **Response #1** is to look to the Lord, pray, and wait on Him to help and vindicate (7:7).

⁷...I will look to [and]...wait for the God of my salvation; He will hear me. (Mic. 7:7)

How did Micah respond? Response #1 in Micah 7:7, he says, "I look to God! I wait on Him to vindicate me! I am looking for His help!"

This sounds very much like David. God said, "Look to Me, David! Don't think you can fix this on your own!" Again, you could spend an hour on that point there, but I will not tonight.

3. **Response #2** to be determined to arise with confidence in God's promises (7:8). Micah may have fallen—by lacking in obedience, love, or mercy in being offended or bitter at those who betrayed him—but he determined to arise to walk in love, mercy, humility, and more.

⁸When I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me... (Mic. 7:8)

Response #2: now Micah is talking about his own response, because he is witnessing this betrayal for money and this opportunist kind of culture and all of these guys doing this to each other. He says, "When I fall," verse 8, "I will arise! When I sit in darkness, the Lord will breakthrough with light for my life and my heart!" What he is saying is this: "I am going to determine to rise up when I am down about this. My pain and even when I see my own failure, I am going to rise up, and I am going to believe that God is going to breakthrough with light in my heart and in my life!"

I have written here that Micah says "When I fall." He might have had lack of obedience in an area of his life or it might have been a lack of maturity of his love or his mercy.

As a top spiritual leader in the nation, I am sure that he imagined himself as being a spiritual example and as a spiritual leader, but maybe he was not as merciful as he thought he was, or maybe he did not have as much integrity. Like, these people attack him so he goes around and attacks them back! And the Lord says, "Micah what are you doing? That is not who you are! I thought you had more integrity than that!"

Micah replies, "So did I! I find myself attacking. Wait! I thought I was a mercy man, I do not have mercy like... whoa!" And so he is finding in himself some dark spots in his heart that he was surprised by and, instead of self-pity and caving in, he said, "I am going to rise up! I am going to set my heart! I am going to get through this! I am not camping out here. That is not what I am doing!"

4. **Response #3** is to bear God's loving discipline without "quitting" our divine assignment (7:9). In times of betrayal we have the opportunity to see our deficiencies in our obedience, love, humility, faith, etc. Micah did not indulge in self-pity, but humbled himself to see the unperceived "fault lines" in his life in order to grow in love, humility, faith, mercy, etc.

9I will bear the indignation [discipline] of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case...I will see His righteousness. (Mic. 7:9)

Response #3: this is really good one, which is the next verse. It is verse 9. He says, in effect, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case, and I know I will have a breakthrough of righteousness. I know I will see this happen in my life." And so what he is saying, in other words, is, "Instead of having self-pity that I see these deficiencies in my life"—again, maybe there are some failures in obedience and some failures in his leadership and character in the midst of this hostile environment. He was supposed to be a shining light of the grace of God, merciful, integral, a man of his word, not fighting evil with evil, not talking about people or slandering them. He does not get on that train that most of the human race is on—he said, "I am going to bear the discipline of the Lord. I am under the Lord's discipline because He is showing me the unperceived fault lines in my heart and mind. I have dark spots I never even thought about. I thought I was doing pretty well, but I see them now. And I am grateful. I have come up short in this place. I have sinned." You could even say, "I have seen my deficiencies in a whole new light, and I am going to bear this discipline of God until God pleads my case and I see a breakthrough of righteousness in my life."

That is the response. It is a "King David" response. Most people, when they get attacked, stumble into self-pity and indulge in it. They do not think of looking at the dark spots of their mind and heart. They look at the dark spots of the people attacking them and get fixated on them. But Micah says, "No, I am not going to do that! I am going about this the right way." That is why Jesus is pointing the apostles to Micah 7, and He is really telling them and the end-time Church: "Go to Micah 7!"

5. **Response #4** is to worship God for His unique kindness—in freely pardoning our sins (7:18). We are filled with gratitude for His extravagant mercy. God delights in giving mercy to His people—this empowers us to delight in giving mercy to others which heals and unifies people.

18Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity...because He delights in mercy... (Mic. 7:18)

Response #4 is in verse 18. Micah breaks out and says, "Who is like You?" Then he worshipped. He said, "You forgive sin!" He is talking about his own sin. "You forgive sin so abundantly!" Why? "Because You delight in giving me mercy! Oh, I am so grateful!" This is what happens when you see God delighting in giving you mercy because you are seeing your sin in a new way because this pressure brings those fault lines to the surface. You thought you were doing pretty well until you were attacked by family members and friends or spiritual leaders or whatever, and then it was like these raging new feelings.

The Lord says, as it were, "Okay, do not worry about them. Bring them to Me. Talk to Me about them! Do not deny them. Talk to Me about them.

And so Micah says, "God has forgiven me! I love you! He delights in mercy!"

Here is what happens: when I see God delight in showing me mercy, it makes me energized to show you mercy. I am happy to show you mercy because that is how the whole kingdom is, and I say, "This works! You know you are getting a free deal, but so am I, so am I! I am getting a good deal." And when you get a good deal—mercy which God delights in—and He gives to you, then you are energized to give it to someone else.

- N. Scripture gives far more information about how to respond rightly to God when being betrayed in the life of David than in any other person. David is a witness of how to respond to God in being a leader after God's heart (Isa. 55:4) even when betrayed (Ps. 41:9-13; 55:12-21; 69:4-18). For over 50 years, David was betrayed many times—by *family members* (his son Absalom, nephew Joab, father-in-law Saul), and by *top political* (Ahithophel) and *military leaders* (Abner; 2 Sam. 3:9), etc.

4I have given him [David] as a witness [model] to the people, a leader... (Isa. 55:4)

I am going to do this fast because this is just a review of the 25 minutes I spend on this in Session 2. However, I want those of you who are new here to know that I developed this in Session 2.

God gave David to be the model of how to respond to betrayal. David was betrayed more than any man in the Bible in terms of the amount of information in the Scripture about his betrayals. He was betrayed by his father-in-law, he was betrayed by his family, he was betrayed by his wife, and he was betrayed by his political cabinet, political leaders, military leaders.

David died when he was seventy, so let's say that his public life began when he was twenty. A lot of people suggest that he killed Goliath when he was eighteen. Nobody knows for sure, and twenty is a nice round number. And so, from twenty to seventy, David had fifty years of dealing with betrayal. I have been studying the life of David over the last many years and have taught it, verse by verse, maybe ten times over forty, forty-five years.

- O. David invoked God's intervention by saying, ***"let God judge or decide"*** (1 Sam. 24:15) knowing that in God's timing wrong things would be made right. By trusting God to intervene, *David brought God into the conflict*. To commit our spirit into God's hands is to commit to God all that deeply touches our spirit—our reputation, money, safety, etc. (Ps. 31:5; Lk. 23:46).

15"Let the LORD be judge, and [decide; NAS] between you [King Saul] and me..." (1 Sam. 24:15)

The life of David is in 1 and 2 Samuel. I am a little bit familiar with his life and the part that kind of blows me away about David is that the whole fifty years of his adult life he experienced betrayal, betrayal. When the Philistines attacked him—the enemies, the "pagans"—that was not betrayal. That was just military conflict. I am talking about internal relationships turning on him. The whole fifty years he had betrayal and then a little reprieve for a few years, betrayal and then a little reprieve, betrayal then some reprieve where he did not have it. And the reason I say that because I remember when I first started reading it. I was in my twenties, and some guys attacked me and said false things. I got through that season, and it went okay for a couple of years, and then in another season some friends attacked me, and I thought, "Oh! Well, I am through that!"

It was like the Lord whispered, "Go read the life of David." His whole fifty years, it was intense because God was training David the whole time. He was showing David as a man and as a king after His own heart.

And so, I finally concluded whenever it was, "You know what? We are never going to be done with this completely until the end, okay?" Okay! Because I had thought. "Well, I did it. I had a couple of hard seasons."

Again, betrayal to me is when a trusted friend or associate with whom you have shared hard in laughter and in fun and love, and they now are undermining you to hinder your progress or to make your life difficult; that is the betrayal of a friend. I have had a good number of those over my life in the last forty-five years. My point is not like, "Oh poor Mike! He has gotten so beat up!" That is not my point; that is not my point. My point is that I have had this forty-five-year look at it and a number of examples of it, and I have found the tenderness and sweetness of God in a way that I never thought I would. And I have said, "This is really real! This stuff really works!" Now I am not there yet. I am not

"broke through all the way," but I believe this is doable. I have a little bit of history so I am not nearly as nervous about that stuff as I used to be, because there is a presence of God and in time the Lord does vindicate you.

However, then a little time will go by, and another betrayal will come. And the Lord says, as it were, "Don't worry! I am training you because I like you so much! And My presence is on you, so just stay with it! Keep seeing the dark spots and keep coming back to Me, and it will be good!"

What David did as he was betrayed season after season—though, again, he did have reprieves—David's one liner that I have used for many, many years, for forty-five years probably, is in 1 Samuel 24:15. I talked about this in the last session. David would have the enemy in front of him and would say, "I can take you out," because he had the military advantage in a number of situations, then said, "I am not going to because you are of the household of faith and you are in the family and you are an anointed leader, so I am not going to do that." And here is what he would say, "Let God decide! I am not going use my mouth or my sword to take you out, but I am going to let God decide." In other language, depending on what translation, it is, "Let God judge." And David said that over and over, and it stuck out to me over the years as I taught his life, and I thought, "That is really the way to do it! Let God decide!"

Eventually, the jealous King Saul was killed by God (1 Chr. 10:14). God killed King Saul. David did not do it. God did, and in God's timing. So David's hands were clean, and he had this new history in God, this new experience that he needed in the years after and the years after that. The Lord was saying, as it were, "That is what I am training My end-time Church in. I am showing them that I will be near them and I will show them the dark spots of their heart to liberate them!"

You know the prayer I have said over the years: "Lord, shock me now; do not shock me then! I do not want You to shock me at the Judgment Seat. Shock me now! If I am not merciful, if I am not kind, if I am not tender and not trusting You, show me now! Do not let me get there and You say. 'Hey, Mike! I love you, but you did not really trust Me. You thought you did, but you really did not, even though all the people around you congratulated you that you did but you did not!'" I would say, "Please do not shock me then. Let me see where I do not trust You now because I can still change it now." That is the wisdom of the Lord, and it is beautiful and wonderful that He shows us these dark spots.

In Psalm 31:5, David made the famous statement, "**Into Your hands I commit my spirit**," which Jesus quoted in Luke 23:46. He said, "Into Your hands I commit My Spirit." Jesus did not mean, "When I die, I will go to heaven." That is not what that verse meant although it is certainly included. When he said, "I commit my spirit," what David meant was "everything that is dear to my spirit, my calling, my reputation, my protection, my life, my family, I commit to You everything dear to me!" And when Jesus was on the cross quoting David, He was not just saying to the Father, "I will see you soon in heaven!" He was saying, "You promised Me to be King of the whole earth. You promised Me Messianic glory. You promised Me all of the nations! I commit all of these promises to You and will let all these men kill me because I know the dear promises are safe in Your hand." That is what David is saying and that is what Jesus is saying.

II. GOD HAS CHOSEN TO USE BETRAYAL TO TRAIN AND TRANSFORM HIS PEOPLE

Roman numeral two: This is a new idea to some people, and it is a very important idea. God has chosen to use betrayal on purpose to train and transform His people. Betrayal has a prominent place in God's end-time prophecies. It is there, and I have shown you a number of them, but there are more. It is intentional. We are not going to duck out of this because the Lord knows that we are going to get transformed in it in a way we will be grateful for.

- A. When God is establishing a strategic kingdom purpose, God allows those who will betray to get into the inner circle of a leadership team in order to test, train, and transform His servants.

⁶⁴Jesus ***knew from the beginning...who would betray Him...*** (Jn. 6:64)

Paragraph A: This is an important statement here: God allows those who betray to get into the inner circle of leadership teams. He does it on purpose. Let me say it this way: it is not an accident. Whenever there is a Holy-Spirit establishment of an important kingdom purpose, and let's say in the earth right now there are ten thousand of those places, maybe there is a million, I do not know. It is none of my business, but thousands of places where God is establishing important kingdom purposes. Wherever He is doing that, I assure you of this: there are always people in the midst of that gathering of people whom God will use to train His leaders to have a heart like David.

Wherever there is a move of God, there is always a jealous Saul somewhere in the midst, not the whole time, but here and there. There will always be a rebellious and ambitious Absalom who is betraying in his ambition. There will always be some angry Pharisees who love the Bible and who fast and pray, but they have an angry spirit and are coming after you. They are looking to undermine you, to dismiss you, and to hurt you, but more than that even, there is always the money-loving opportunist, Judas. Judas was about money. He was an opportunist. He was not trying to become the new king like Absalom. He was not jealous of losing his position like Saul. He was after the money.

- B. We can encounter God's love for us in a greater way in times when we are betrayed—as the spirit of glory rests on us (1 Pet. 4:14), as we see our deficiencies more clearly, and we experience God's love for those who betray us. Showing love to a friend who betrays us displays God's love in us.

44“...bless those who curse you, do good...⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father...” (Mt. 5:44-45)

Paragraph B: I have an important statement here: we can encounter God's love in a greater way when we are betrayed. You say “What? What do you mean, we are going to encounter God's love in a greater way?” Number one, the Spirit of glory rests on you. There is a tenderizing; there are sparks of insight and understanding with clarity which come to your mind. I do not know if they are sparks, but you know what I mean, just little moments of clarity that are new and a tenderizing of the heart and a strengthening.

We see our deficiencies more clearly, and we might think that is, “Ugh!” No, that is a great gift because if we make those changes, we will have billions of years to live in the fruit of having made changes in our character in this age. This is the only time ever you can repent from sin and deny sin because in forever you do not ever have that chance. There is only one time, right now in this age. And so when God shows us these things, this is the glory of God for us to see these things.

Not only that, you can experience the love of God for a person who has betrayed you. This is what I meant when I said a few minutes ago that I have experienced a bit of this, not perfectly. I do not want to overstate this but I have experienced it a number of times. I am looking at the guy that has betrayed me and sometimes they do not know that I know they have betrayed me. I have heard the stories, and they are putting me down, but they are smiling and all “mush bucket type” stuff, but I already know they are lying and are scheming, yet I feel tenderness! I think, “Wait a second! How does a weak, broken, and dorky person like me have Holy Spirit tenderness like this? Where did this come from!”

The Lord would say, “It is real! I am real! And you are experiencing it!” Wow, because when you love someone who betrayed you, and you feel it? Beloved, that is the most supernatural display of power. I mean, that is a dynamic display of the reality of God, and He is going to use the display of millions of believers loving the ones who betrayed them with a billion unbelievers saying, “What do they know about God that we do not know?”

- C. Judas was a thief and a liar who betrayed to gain money (Lk. 22:3-6; Mk. 14:11; Jn. 12:6). He was merely an opportunist who betrayed for money without being vindictive or offended at Jesus.

6...he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. (Jn. 12:6)

¹⁰Judas...went to the chief priests to betray...¹¹They promised to give him money. (Mk. 14:10-11)

Paragraph C: Why do people betray? Judas betrayed because he was a liar and a thief. That is the primary emphasis in the gospels. It is the betrayal of a liar and a thief. Micah 7, it was the liar and the thief and the money person. That is where the majority of the betrayal was, but for David, Saul betrayed him out of jealousy, Absalom out of ambition, Ahithophel out of revenge, Korah out of rebellion.

In Mark 14:10-11, the spirit of Judas is said to betray for money. It says in Mark 14:10 that Judas went to the chief priests. He knocked on their door and said, "Hey, I hear that you are looking for an opportunity to inquire more about my leader."

If you read the whole text, it says when the Pharisees, the chief priests, the top leaders heard it, they were very glad and said, "You would be willing to help us get Him without creating a riot?" Because if they went to grab Jesus in public, I mean there would have been a riot and the chief priests would get in trouble with the populous, the people.

So in verse 10, he is seeking an opportunity to get money, and in verse 11, now that they agreed to give it to him, he is thinking, "Hmmm, how can I get that money without getting caught? I want to get the money and never, ever let anyone know that I did it." Now he is looking for an opportunity to make it work without getting caught.

- D. Jesus was troubled by Judas's betrayal (Jn. 13:21) not because He felt rejected or thought God's will would be hindered by it as He knew within 24 hours both of them would have died. Jesus felt pain over the fate of one He loved but who refused His kindness. The apostles watched Jesus go from being troubled to showing "friendship" to Judas within about 6 hours. Jesus asked Judas "Why?" (Mt. 26:50). Betrayers do not have clarity on the long-term consequences of their actions.

⁴⁹...[Judas] went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they...laid hands on Jesus and took Him. (Mt. 26:49-50)

Paragraph D: Jesus is, here in John 13:21, at the Last Supper, and He says, "I am really troubled" because of Judas betraying Him. Why do you think Jesus had anguish about being betrayed? I believe that it was because He loved Judas. We will see that in a moment. Jesus knew that within 24 hours both of them will have died.

Jesus was not worried about Judas rejecting Him. It was not because Judas did not like Him. That is not why Jesus was troubled (Jn. 13:21). Jesus was not saying that Judas was going to disrupt the Father's kingdom plans. It was not that. Jesus was not hurt by Judas not understanding Him. He knew that from the beginning. He never trusted Judas, ever. He was not worried Judas was going to stop God's purpose. He actually had anguish over the man He actually loved because He knew in twenty-four hours where he was going to be going and He actually loved him.

Look at Matthew 26:40-50; they are in the garden of Gethsemane. Judas had told the multitude of Roman soldiers, "I know where they are hiding. They are not in the Upper Room. They were there earlier, but I know exactly where the place is now." So Judas has all of these Roman soldiers over on the side because they do not want a big scene. They want to get Him and get Him out of there without a riot. They do not quite know.

The Roman soldiers ask Judas, "Okay, which one is it?"

He says, "I will go kiss him, and then when you see Him, you seize Him quickly." Verse 49, and so Judas comes and says, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and he kisses Him, just mush-bucket. "Oh, You are amazing!" because with the spirit of Judas that is how they present themselves.

And then Jesus looked at him and said, "Friend," which was an absolutely true statement with no exaggeration—"You are really My friend"—meaning "I am really offering you friendship right now. I am really genuine about offering you friendship and I know everything." Then He asked Judas the most piercing question, "Why have you come?"

Remember when God asks a question, it is not because God needs an answer; it is the person He is asking who needs the answer. And in kindness, He says, "Why are you here?" In other words, betrayers rarely have clarity of the big-picture consequences. They are fixated on the immediate gratification. He has a bag of gold waiting for him. "Judas, stop! Think big picture! Think five years, fifty years, and a million years, why are you here? I have just offered you friendship." There is a bag of gold, man. All I have to do is say He is the one and then the gold is mine! I mean it is mine! And so he does it. So here in verses 49 and 50 is the contrasting of the most intense contrast of false friendship with genuine friendship. There has never been a greater contrast here.

Jesus told the apostles about Judas' betrayal because He knew within some six hours (I made up the six hours as I do not really know) from the dinner in the Upper Room to the garden that Judas would betray Jesus, yet Jesus has continued to show and offered friendship to Judas (Mt. 26:50). An hour earlier, Jesus was weeping, sweating blood and tears with so much anguish over what He was going to face, but He recovered, and James and John saw it in such a way that He actually had friendship for Judas! "How did You recover so quickly?"

Jesus is saying, as it were, "I am modeling to you eleven that you are going to be betrayed, as I told you on Tuesday. Even your family members will betray you. You are going to get kicked out of the synagogue. You must respond like I am responding. I will even give you grace to have the anguish that I am going through in the garden of Gethsemane, but I have recovered to show genuine friendship and care for Judas."

- E. Betrayal is often psychologically traumatizing both to those who betray and to those betrayed. People who betray suffer in a heightened ways that they did not anticipate (Jas. 3:15; 1 Pet. 4:15). A thief, evildoer, or busybody suffers consequences externally in their circumstance if they get caught and internally as demonic darkness attacks their mind and emotions in a greater way. Those who betray are usually motivated in the same ways that thieves, evildoers, and busybodies are.

¹⁵Let none of you suffer as...a thief, an evildoer [betrayer], or a busybody... (1 Pet. 4:15)

Betrayal is psychologically traumatizing. It typically traumatizes the person getting betrayed, but it also traumatizes the betrayer, too. We think of the pain of the person getting betrayed, "Oh that is so horrible!" and only by the grace of God do people get through that—there is the Spirit of glory empowering and enabling them. We do not often think about the betrayer and the trauma they go through. Judas did not want to harm Jesus. No, he just wanted the money! I am imagining Judas was thinking, "Jesus will pull out some miracles. He will win them over, and I will still get my money! If we can see the plight of the betrayer, we will have a far greater chance to have a compassion on them.

Over the years I have been able to see a little glimpses of the anguish of the people who have betrayed me. And I have had a good number of them. And I think, "Wow! I have the Spirit of God touching me in His presence, and godly family, godly friends, godly things, with purposes unfolding. What am I complaining about?" I mean when a person gets into a spirit of betrayal—and betrayal does not just happen one night. Judas thought on this for a long time— normally betrayal is long-term, building, building, building, and building.

Peter said, 1 Peter 4:15, "Let none of you suffer as a thief and an evildoer, a busybody, a gossip." So you suffer in two ways. You suffer as a thief and an evildoer because you get caught and there are consequences. However, you suffer the other way if you do not get caught. It is all internal, but you still have consequences. There are internal consequences they are suffering. Most of us would only think of the suffering of a busybody if they got caught, but the busybody is in turmoil inside, constantly, because a busybody is a betrayer and so is the evildoer.

What happens when a person becomes a betrayer: dark thoughts come to their mind, and they begin to feel despair. They begin to feel hopeless in their mind. They cannot sleep at night. Their emotions are in turmoil. Their mind is racing a hundred miles an hour. They have no peace. And then it starts to touch their body and their health. It starts hitting them. The betrayer has a tough road, and it is really tough forever if they do not come out of it. When I look at the betrayers, I think, "They have the tough role. They think they are in the power position. No, they are in the ouch position. They just do not know it right now. They think, 'Well, a little Pepto Bismol and I will get through it.'" No, no they can hardly sleep at night. That is how betrayers are.

So what I am doing is: I want to train a generation to not be bitten by the root of bitterness, and for bitterness not to get them or then they become a betrayer, but to have compassion get ahold of them so that they look at that betrayer and, all of a sudden, the glory of God frees their heart. They have peace in their mind and are able to sleep at night. They have the pleasure of God and feel it while they are being betrayed. However, for a whole generation, if they are not prepared for it, the root of bitterness—Hebrews 12—is going to get them and the betrayal against them will make them a betrayer because they are just tired of it. They are just fed up with it. "I just have no more bandwidth for anything!" That is the emotional pathway of a betrayer. That is the trauma of betrayal on the betrayer.

- F. Those who betray open themselves to increased demonic torment (Jas. 3:15) that results in increased darkness that assaults their mind with growing fear, anxiety, despair, and confusion (Jas. 3:16). Satan stirred Judas to betray Jesus. He was unable to get free from the dark dynamics of despair and hopelessness that resulted from opening the door to demons—Judas hung himself.

14But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth [by justifying it]. 15This wisdom [mind set]...is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. (Jas. 3:14-16)

James really says it clearly. James 3:14, "But if you have this envy, if you have this self-seeking opportunist like Judas, do not lie about it to yourself. Do not boast and say, 'Hey I am free!' Do not boast! You are in trouble. You are on a trajectory of trouble, of a dark mind and dark emotions. Do not lie against the truth," because, verse 15, "this wisdom, this mindset, is demonic." That is, you are opening yourself up to the realm of demonic torment. I do not mean that you will just have terrible dreams, but that you will have anxiety constantly that you cannot get free of. Not all anxiety is demonic; I am not saying that, but I am saying that a person who is moving in the spirit of Judas and that opportunist spirit, they will sell someone out to get that little pot of gold.

He said here in verse 16, "If you have that mindset, you have confusion inside of you and everything evil." He is talking about inside of you. He is not talking about your car breaking down, or your house does not work. He is talking about internally, that you have evil working in you. You cannot have peace.

Satan stirred up Judas. Now Satan did not make Judas do this, and this was not a one-time decision. Judas was a thief from the very beginning. Satan was stirring him up constantly, and finally he made his choices, but later he hung himself. People think that he hung himself because he was so sorry that he did it. I do not think that was true. It says he was remorseful, but I do not think he said, "Oh Jesus, I love You so much! Oh my goodness, I did not know they were going to do this to You!" I think that what happened was Judas did this because he had opened the door to demonic activity, and this dark dynamic began to accelerate in his thinking in his mind. There was no way out! And he hung himself.

It is interesting that David's friend Ahithophel betrayed David and hung himself just like Judas. However, the point I am making is that the verses that David wrote about this man who betrayed him and hung himself are the verses in the New Testament used to describe Judas. They used the David verses. Both of them hung themselves at the end because

they were so sorry, but the darkness took over and they could not stop it and control it. It is destructive, it is everything evil, and it is demonic.

- G. Ask the Spirit to release compassion to you for those who betray you—knowing that they open themselves up to be tormented. We are most like God when we have compassion on them (Mt. 5:45). Those who become offended or bitter often become ones who eventually betray others.

¹⁵looking carefully lest...any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble... (Heb. 12:15)

Paragraph G: Ask the Holy Spirit to release God's compassion in your heart for the people betraying you, knowing they open themselves up to demonic activity. A betrayer does not even know it. They think they really have it together. They are opening up themselves up to demonic activity, but they just do not know it. Demons do not tell you when they are getting you. It results in fear, darkness and despair and mostly hopelessness, and just fear and with no clarity, a clouded mind—"I cannot get clear"—and it affects their body which I have already said.

When we have compassion on those who mistreat us—we are never more like God when we bless those who curse us (Mt 5:44-45). Jesus listed four things. He said, "Love those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who come against you, and pray for them. You do good, and you will be like your Father in heaven!" You are never more like God than when you are responding rightly to mistreatment by a betrayer. Again, I am talking about a person who is close to you. I am not talking about someone far away, but someone close. You will display the glory of God in yourself, and you will feel it.

I do not want to overdo this, but I have felt it a few times over the years. I thought, "This is doable! I like this!" and the Lord says, as it were, "You are just a little pee-wee. Stay with it. You will like it more as you experience it more and more and more."

I am not going to develop this, but the first communion takes place in John 13 where the betrayal is declared. There is something about communion and betrayal. Even when Paul was talking about it in 1 Corinthians 11, he said "When the Lord revealed to me communion, that was the time the betrayer happened!" Even Paul associated it with the betrayer. Why?

I love what Lou Engle is doing—some of you know this—and Frances Chan and some others. They are talking about this global communion revival because, when we take communion, in reality we are confronting God's delight in forgiving us! That gratitude touches us, and we look at people who do not deserve our kindness but we have kindness for them because that is what communion is all about! The Lord is saying, "My Son's body and blood, His body broken and His blood shed because God delights to show you mercy!" Now you are energized to show them mercy. Collectively the body of Christ through this season of training will be like a living portrait of the glory of God to an unbelieving world, and that is what the Lord is going to use to bring in the billion-soul harvest. Signs and wonders yes, but people who live supernaturally who, instead of becoming bitter and then becoming a betrayer, they saw the plight of the betrayer and felt compassion, felt and wanted to be a vessel to bring redemption to the betrayer. Jesus was literally offering Judas friendship! "It did not have to be this way, Judas! Why are you doing this? Think it through!"

Well, amen and amen! Let's stand before the Lord.

I know I went long and do not typically go this long, but this is such an important subject, and I do not want to do it week after week after week. I just wanted to get it all in within the last three messages. We will come back to

persecution later, but I want to move on to the other subjects. I have these three handouts on persecution which are at least a beginning to get a conversation going in your heart, your friendships, and your family if you do not have the conversation going on right now.

Father, here we are right now before You.

Now I am imagining in this room eighty percent at least have somebody that you have a familiar relationship with, a friend, family member, or worker, who is betraying you. They are speaking evil against you to undermine you right now. And you are figuring out whether you are either going to be David and Micah or you are going to go and take them out and set the record straight. Are you going to put them in their place or are you going to let God put them in their place because many of them are in the family of God?

Think about that right now. If you choose the biblical response, little by little, not immediately, you will get transformed. You will get liberated on the inside, but if you go the other direction and get more vulnerable to that root of bitterness, that is a dark trajectory. It takes a while to get dark, but it is a dark one.

Father, here we are before You. I say Micah 7:18, "Who is like the Lord? He abundantly forgives me because He delights in mercy!" You delight in mercy, Lord! Thank You, thank You, Lord! I want to be a man who feels Your delight and mercy for me, and I want to delight in mercy for them.

I want to train a generation to delight in mercy. The gold is not worth it. The money is not worth it. Absalom wanted the kingship, but the position is not worth it. Ahithophel wanted revenge; revenge is not worth it. Korah wanted rebellion; that is not worth it to get your way on the leadership team!

Lord, I am Yours! I am Yours, O God!

It is not only about you getting free; we need to get the next generation trained and free. We all have to work together, across the earth, to get the next generation ready for this. We need millions of us, spiritual Moms and Dads on board.

Jesus, we love You.

Now typically, I invite people to come forward for prayer, but I am not going to do that tonight. I want you to talk to God. Everyone in this room is probably being betrayed by somebody, somebody is putting you down and trying to hurt you in some way to undermine you, and your heart is in the balance right now. The Lord has called you to be a shepherd to train the next generation.

Lord, I say, yes. Lord, I say, yes. Help me, a weak man. Help me, Lord. Jesus, we love You! You delight in mercy! Who is like You? Who is like the Lord?

He asked Judas, "Judas, why are you here? Think Judas! What are you doing? Think Judas!"

Oh, we love You!

You will never be more like God than when you are kind when people mistreat you.

We love You, Jesus! Our love is weak, but our love is real, Jesus!