



Midweek Meditation



"Not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction." John 17:12

The story of Judas is a tragedy. Not so much that he betrayed Jesus, but that he was lost forever. His sin of betrayal was forgiven. Jesus died for him also. He simply did not believe it. There are two parts to confession: one, that we confess our sins; the second, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, for our sins. Judas did the first part. He returned the money to the chief priests admitting, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood!" The second part of confession, however, never took place. Rather than absolving him, the priests said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." So he did. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life. Judas went out and hanged himself. He was attempting to pay the price for his sin of betrayal. Judas ended up perishing forever, but most certainly it was the chief priests with whom God was angry. Judas needlessly went to hell. These priests could have opened heaven's door to him by giving him Gospel instead of Law.

May this never happen to you! Jesus strictly commands His pastors to absolve the sins of those who are penitent. No pastor dare ever give a penitent the words which were given to Judas. When poor sinners are told to take care of their own sins - by doing works of penance, by giving money to the church, or by doing good works for their neighbor - Jesus is angry. He died for all. The sin of the world was laid upon Him. No one is able to take care of their own sin, nor can we. Jesus declared the words, "It is finished!" for us all. The only thing we can do with our sins is to confess them. It is God, and He alone, who takes responsibility for our sins. Once we confess them, they are not ours to deal with anymore. Now they belong to Jesus. And He already carried them to His cross. They are forgiven. You are forgiven.

Lord Jesus, I am a great sinner, but you are an even greater Savior. Thank you for taking also my sins to Your cross. Amen.