

2004年6月25日劝勉词-所读章节：马太福音 26章 艾伦弟兄

亲爱的弟兄姐妹们：

在我们的主里对你致以问候！我们今天所读的第三部分是马太福音，这一章谈到的一些导致了我们的主被钉十字架的重要内容。这一章讲的很明白，我们的主就是在十字架上的时候也是十分的顺服，他给了我们一个伟大的榜样。我们在第21节读到了一个故事，那就是当耶稣和他的门徒在楼里准备吃那我们称之为“最后的晚餐”的故事。

背判者犹大

耶稣告诉他的门徒说，他们中的一个人会出卖他：耶稣说，我实在告诉你们，你们中间有一个人要卖我了。他的门徒很难相信这是事实，我们可以在第22节看到他们的反应“他们就甚忧愁，一个一个地问他，主，是我吗？由于耶稣没有指出谁是出卖他的人，每一个门徒都开始检查自己是否走在一条正确的道路上。当我们来到这里掰饼喝这酒来纪念我们的主的时候，也是给了我们一个时间看自己是否行在真理里。我们是不是总是努力成为主的好的门徒？我们不是要去检查坐在我们身旁的弟兄姐妹，去看他们做了些什么——我们应该检查我们自己做了些什么。十一个门徒中没有一个人心想是犹大出卖耶稣，甚至没想到从一开始耶稣基督就知道谁是出卖他的人，这就意味着耶稣在他做祭司的时候从来没有暗示任何人犹大有问题。我们可以在这里学到一个功课，那就是如果我们事先知道一些关于犹大的情况，我们会忍不住去给别人一些线索提醒别人，还有可能说一些闲言碎语去把对犹大的嫌疑散发出去。但是耶稣也没有这样做。我们不能说一些反对我们弟兄姐妹的话。当然，我们做事的方式可能不同，有些时候（但不是总是）我们做的会非常的好。但是，我们不能去建议我们的弟兄姐妹出于不良的动机做些不该做的事。我们也不能在别人背后去批评别人。在罗马书第12章第10节里：使徒保罗这样告诫我们：爱弟兄，要彼此亲热。恭敬人，要彼此推让。因此在最后的晚餐上，门徒们所做的是正确的，他们是在体察他们自己，而不是去想犹大做了些什么。尽管犹大是犯了罪的，因为他已经为了30块钱和大祭司做了安排，用一个吻做暗号去出卖耶稣基督。当他们中的大多数都没有在听的时候，耶稣肯定了犹大是出卖他的人。卖耶稣的犹大问他说，拉比，是我吗？耶稣说，你说的是。（马太福音26：25）甚至到了最后的时刻，犹大都可以改变自己的主意，如果他认识到耶稣十分清楚他的想法和行为时，犹大对自己过去的行为会十分的后悔，并决心和其他门徒一样去追寻耶稣。但他却没有这样的做，他的思想是建立在邪恶上的，在那个时候如果要想有什么改变是不可能的。后来他对自己的所作所为感到十分的悲伤，但是为时已晚。这个世界上很多的人都象犹大一样。他们的心是放在自己的心思意念上的，他们并没有期望用耶稣的话和道路来改变自己。

最后的晚餐

在犹大离开楼的时候，耶稣和他的门徒掰饼喝酒，他们吃的时候，耶稣拿起饼来，祝福，就掰开，递给门徒，说，你们拿着吃，这是我的身体。又拿起杯来，祝谢了，递给他们，说，你们都喝这个。因为这是我立约的血，为多人流出来，使罪得赦。（第26-28节）这对门徒来说有一点突然，我们可以想象一下他们静静

地吃饼喝酒。心里感激主所做的神圣的一切，但是却觉得难以理解。只是在后来当他们得到指示，用喝酒掰饼来纪念主耶稣和他为我们所做的工（使徒行传 2:42 和哥林多前书 11:23）。只是后来他们才真正理解了这掰饼喝酒的含义。很明显地，这饼并不是耶稣基督真正的身体，这血也不是耶稣基督真正的血。这些东西也不会因为某些神迹回到耶稣基督的身体里。这里只是用了一个比喻，如耶稣说：“我是门”，这里并不意味着他就是真正的物质意义上的门。

饼

掰饼给他的门徒是耶稣的身体的象征。他的全部的生命和他的肉体已经被奉献给作神的工作，而现在他的身体又将成为献祭。耶稣的肉体和我们是一样的，有着一样的软弱，有着一样的犯罪的倾向，一样的都是可朽坏的。保罗把这称之为“罪身”（罗马书 6:6）。纵观他的整个生命历程，耶稣却从来没有向肉体的情欲屈服，他也从来没有犯罪。直到钉死在十字架上他也顺从于他的父。当我们掰这饼，我们要记住耶稣用他的身体为我们做的榜样，并要努力的去学习榜样。我们在圣经上学到的耶稣的所作所为，他的追随者也要这样地做：“凡属基督耶稣的人，是已经把肉体，连肉体的邪情私欲，同钉在十字架上了。（加拉太书 5:24）”

酒

门徒所喝的酒象征着耶稣的血，这血也象征着他的生命，他的一生是如此的神圣清洁，然而现在他的生命却要通过罗马人的手做了献祭。这流出的血是约的一部分，是神和他的子民所立的协议，因此就有一个献祭使罪得赦免。“因为这是我立约的血，为多人流出来，使罪得赦。”（第 28 节）当我们喝这酒，我们应想到耶稣为了我们的软弱而献出了生命，使我们的罪得以赦免，并有了获得永恒的生命盼望。当我们喝这酒的时候，我们期待着在神国里和耶稣基督的团契。但我告诉你们，从今以后，我不再喝这葡萄汁，直到我在我父的国里，同你们喝新的那日子。（第 29 节）。在吃最后的晚餐时，他的门徒并没真正理解耶稣所说的话，因为他们不知道耶稣将被抓走并要被残酷地在十字架上，他们仍和他一起唱赞美诗和读诗篇，正好读到了诗篇第 113 到 118 章，描写犹太人要在逾越节要做的事，这些诗篇以羊羔的献祭做了结尾耶和華是神。他光照了我们。理当用绳索把祭牲拴住，牵到坛角那里。（诗篇 118:27）。耶稣将要成为这被献祭的羔羊。

到橄榄山

耶稣和他的门徒离开楼，往橄榄山去（第 30 节）。那时天色已晚，几乎没有人可以看见他们在黑暗里慢慢的走向汲沦谷，然后又到了橄榄山一侧的客西马尼园。耶稣当时处于十分的悲痛当中，他清楚地告诉他的门徒那晚什么事情将要发生：那时，耶稣对他们说，今夜你们为我的缘故，都要跌倒。因为经上记着说，我要击打牧人，羊就分散了。耶稣引用了撒迦利亚书 13 章第 7 节的话，然后又给了他们一个能再次与他相见的盼望但我复活以后，要在你们以先往加利利去（第 32 节）。而在那没有一个门徒可以理解这些话的意思，至少彼德还是有信心的说：众人虽然为你的缘故跌倒，我却永不跌倒。（第 33 节）甚至当耶稣说

彼德在那天晚上将三次不认主，彼德断言自己不可能不认主的。马修进一步记录了有关的内容，“众门徒都是这样说”（第 35 节）我们可以批评这些人做了如此的断言吗？在下来的几个小时里，门徒中的许多人都要从耶稣身边逃走，留下他一个受苦，在场的只有一个妇人和使徒约翰。我们不是也同样做这样的事吗？我们不是在受洗的时候也说要追随我们的主，但后来当有人说一些反对我们的主的话的时候我却不吭声？我们今天来纪念我们的主，这样我们的信心得以加强，我们决心得以巩固。我们的罪可以得以赦免，而继续勇敢地走在这生命之路上。在客西马尼的园子里 马太的记录向我们展现了在客西马尼的园子里耶稣关于那个可怕的夜晚的想法、他的痛苦和他完全的战胜了罪的胜利。在创世记的最开始的几个章节里，亚当和夏娃在伊甸园里向罪屈服，而现在战胜死亡的胜利却发生在另外一个园子里。耶稣留下他的八个门徒，而带走与他亲近的三个进了园子（第 37 节）他“就忧愁起来，极其难过。”他说到，“我心里甚是忧伤，几乎要死。”而由于耶稣承担了战胜死的重担，我们得以拯救。如先知以赛亚在以赛亚第 53 节所说：* 担当了我们的忧患，背负我们的痛苦 * 为我们的过犯受害 * 为我们的罪孽压伤 他是神的羔羊，将为除去世上的罪而死。然而，如果存在一种方式可以避免采用这样残忍的刑罚，他希望能采用那要的方法。然而他很快下定决心去实现他的父的旨意。他的一生都是为了实现他的父的旨意，直到最后的时间里，他仍然顺服于他的父“俯伏在地祷告说，我父阿，倘若可行，求你叫这杯离开我。然而不要照我的意思，只要照你的意思”（第 39 节）。他如此真诚地祷告了三次。他和他的门徒楼上共同分享这杯中的酒。作为对生命给予的一种象征。现在他不得不去面对这舍弃生命的现实。希伯来书第 5 章第 7 节引用了这样的事：基督在肉体的时候，既大声哀哭，流泪祷告，恳求那能救他免死的主，就因他的虔诚蒙了应允。父听到了他的爱子的哭泣。但因这是从开始就制定的神圣的计划一个部分，耶稣没有被免去一死。然而他在死了三天以后从坟墓里出来得到了拯救，同时也战胜了死和罪。这时，一个天使被派到了园子里来用伟大的试炼使神的儿子加添他的力量（路加福音 22：43）。在客西马尼，对罪的胜利得以完全，耶稣在第二天仍要面临刑罚。但是他从园子的平静中显现，决心完成父的工作，这死亡的力量在这个时候已经完全被败坏了。耶稣本身因他的献祭得到益处的同时，他所作的一切都是为了我们。希伯来书第 2 章第 18 节说到“他自己既然被试探而受苦，就能搭救被试探的人。我们不能说我们受到的试探比他受到的要恶劣的多。我们所能说的是耶稣基督可以理解我们所有的困难，他有能力为我们除去这些困难。我们有如此伟大的大祭司，通过他，我们可以“为要得怜恤，蒙恩惠作随时的帮助。”（希 4：16）对我们的劝勉 那天晚上在园子里门徒已经睡着。那些说他不会否认耶稣并可以为自己耶稣而死的人在他需要的时刻没有睡着了。我们总是跌倒而达不到理想。我们有追随那可以引领我们的主耶稣的渴望，但是我却会跌倒而达不到目标。这就是为什么我们每个星期来到这里掰饼唱酒纪念我们的主的原因。我们掰饼来纪念主为了他的父的愿望奉献出自己的生命，以此来鼓励我们和我们的主一样，做同样的自我奉献的工作；我们喝这酒来纪念主的生命的奉献，因主的命的奉献我们可以得到救赎和对永恒生命的盼望。我们如此行，为的是在言语和行为上得到鼓励，成为他的门徒，“直到他来”。

关于马太福音第 26 章的问题讨论

1. 在谢饼的时候，我们要为什么而祷告？
2. 在谢酒的时候，我们要为什么而祷告？
3. 在加利利的什么地方门徒被告之可以再见到耶稣？
4. 客西马尼的意思是什么？讨论一下它在园子里如何与耶稣所处的时代相联系？线索：什么树长在园子里？
5. 还有什么其他时候耶稣和彼德和西庇太的两个儿子约翰和詹姆士在一起？

Exhortation for 25/6/04 – Reading: Matthew 26 – Bro Allan Archer

(Note for readers in English as a second language: the New King James Version has been used where it provides clarity).

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Loving greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our third reading for today is Matthew 26, which covers important events leading up to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. It shows clearly that the Lord was obedient even unto his death on the cross, so setting us a great example.

We take up the story in verse 21, when Jesus was in the upper room with his disciples about to have what we call “the last supper”.

Judas the Betrayer

Jesus told his disciples that one of them would betray him: “Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me”. The disciples can hardly believe this. Their reaction is in verse 22: “They were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, ‘Lord, is it I?’ ” (Verse 21).

By Jesus not identifying the betrayer, each disciple began to examine himself, which is the right way. When we come to remember our Lord in the bread and the wine, it is time to examine how we ourselves are going in the Truth. Are we trying to be a disciple of our Lord? We do not examine the brother or sister sitting next to us and question what they are doing—we examine ourselves.

None of the other eleven disciples thought that Judas would betray Jesus, even though Jesus had known from the beginning that Judas would be the betrayer. That means that Jesus never gave any indication at all to the others during his ministry that there was a problem with Judas. There is

a great lesson for us in this. If we had known information about Judas in advance, we could hardly have stopped ourselves from giving hints to others. Eventually gossip would be spread about the suspicions surrounding Judas.

This is not the way of Christ. We should not be speaking against our brethren. Of course, we all do things differently and sometimes (but not always) our way may be best. However, we should never suggest that a brother or sister is doing something because of an evil motive. Nor should we criticise them to other people without first speaking to them ourselves. The Apostle Paul told us in Romans 12:10: “Be kindly affectionate to one to another with brotherly love; in honour giving preference to one another” .

Therefore, at the last supper, the disciples were right in examining themselves and not Judas. Judas however was clearly guilty, for he had already arranged with the chief priests to betray Jesus with a kiss for 30 pieces of silver. While most of the others were not listening, Jesus confirmed to Judas that he was the betrayer “Then Judas, who was betraying him, answered and said, ‘Rabbi, is it I?’ He said to him, ‘You have said it’ .” (Matt 26:25)

Even at this late stage, Judas could have changed his mind. Realising now that Jesus knew his very thoughts and actions, Judas could have repented of his past actions and determined to follow Jesus with the other disciples. He did not. His mind was so set on evil, and that change did not seem possible at this stage. Afterwards he was sorry for what he had done, but it was then too late.

Many people in the world are like Judas. Their heart is so set on their own course, that they are unwilling to be changed by the words and ways of Christ.

The Last Supper

After Judas left the upper room, Jesus broke bread and drank wine with his disciples: “And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body’ . And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, ‘Drink you all of it; for this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins’ .” (Verses 26–28)

Here was something new for the disciples. We can imagine that they ate and drank in silence, appreciating the solemnity of what the Lord was doing, though hardly understanding. Only later would they be instructed to break bread and drink wine regularly to remember the Lord Jesus Christ and his work (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 11:23). Only later would they appreciate the full

meaning of the bread and wine.

Obviously, the bread was not the actual body of Jesus and the wine was not his actual blood. Neither were they turned into his body and blood by some mystical priestly process. A figure of speech is being used; just as when Jesus said, "I am the door", he did not mean that he was a real door.

The Bread

The bread broken and given to the disciples was a symbol of Jesus' body. All his life, his body had been devoted to doing God's will and now his body was about to be offered up in sacrifice. Jesus' body was the same as ours, with all its weaknesses, its proneness to sin, its mortality. Paul called it "the body of sin" (Romans 6:6). Throughout all his life, Jesus did not give in to the lusts of his body and never sinned. He was obedient even unto death on the cross.

When we eat the bread, we remember the example that Jesus showed in his body and seek to do the same. What Jesus did literally, his followers are to do figuratively. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Galatians 5:24)

The Wine

The wine drunk by the disciples symbolised Jesus' blood, which in turn was a symbol of his life. He had lived a holy and sinless life and now his life was about to be given up through the hand of the Romans. This shedding of blood was part of the new covenant, or agreement, that God was making with his people. A sacrifice was being made that would provide forgiveness of sins: "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (verse 28).

When we drink the wine, we remember the pouring out of Jesus' life for our sake, that we may have forgiveness of our sins and have the hope of eternal life. We look forward to the fellowship of our Lord in the Kingdom when we will drink wine with him: "But I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Verse 29).

At the last supper, the disciples would not have understood what Jesus meant, for they did not understand that Jesus was about to be taken and wickedly crucified. Nevertheless, they sang with him a hymn, or more correctly a psalm, which in accordance with Jewish practice at the Passover would have been from Psalm 113-118. These Psalms finished with a reference to the sacrifice of the Lamb— "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar" (Psalm 118:27). Jesus was about to become the sacrificed Lamb.

To the Mount of Olives

Jesus and his disciples now left the upper room and walked towards the Mount of Olives (verse 30). It was late at night and few would see the party make their way slowly down in the dark to the Brook Kedron and then climb up to the Garden of Gethsemane on the side of Olivet.

Jesus, in all his distress, clearly tells his disciples what is about to happen to them that night: "All of you shall be offended because of me this night, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered abroad' ." (verses 31-32). Jesus was quoting from Zechariah 13:7. Then he gives them the hope of seeing him again: "But after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee" (verse 32).

None of the disciples understood these words yet, least of all Peter who confidently claimed, "Though all men shall be offended because of you, yet will I never be offended" (verse 33). Even when Jesus said that Peter would that night deny him three times, Peter protested that he would never deny Jesus. Matthew's record adds, "Likewise also said all the disciples" (verse 35).

Could we criticise these men for making such a claim? Within just a few hours, most of them would flee from their Lord into hiding, leaving him to suffer in the presence of just the women and the apostle John. Have we not done the same? Have we not at our baptism said that we would follow our Lord, and then afterwards have stayed silent when men have spoken against the Lord Jesus Christ?

We remember our Lord today that our faith may be strengthened and our resolve made stronger. We can be forgiven of our shortcomings and picked up to walk once more boldly along the path of life.

At the Garden of Gethsemane

Matthew's record takes us now to the Garden of Gethsemane where the thoughts of Jesus on that dreadful night are revealed to all, his agony clearly seen, and his victory over the power of sin completed. In the early chapters of Genesis, Adam and Eve succumb to sin in a garden. Now victory over sin occurs in another garden.

Jesus leaves eight disciples behind and takes his three closest disciples with him further into the garden (verse 37). He "began to be sorrowful and very heavy". He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (verse 38). On Jesus lay the burden of the defeat of sin that would become available for all men. As Isaiah the prophet says in his 53rd chapter:

- He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows

- He was wounded for our transgressions
- He was bruised for our iniquities

He was the Lamb of God who would be slain to take away the sin of the world. Yet, if there were some other way whereby the horribleness of crucifixion could be avoided, he wished to take that way. His own will wished for another way. However, he was quick to resolve that his Father's will should be done. All his life, he had done his Father's will and now, at the final hour, he remained obedient to his Father: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Verse 39). Three times he prayed earnestly in this way. He had shared the cup of wine with the disciples at the upper room, as a symbol of a life given. Now he had to face the reality of the pouring out of his life.

Hebrews 5:7 refers to these events: "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save him from death, and was heard because of his godly fear."

The Father heard the cries of His beloved Son. He was not saved from death, for that was part of the divine plan from the beginning. He was however saved out of the bonds of death three days later when he emerged from the grave, the victory over sin and mortality having been won. Meanwhile an angel was sent to the Garden to sustain and strengthen the Son of God in his hour of great trial (Luke 22:43).

At Gethsemane, the victory over sin was completed. Jesus still was to face crucifixion the next day, but he emerges from the Garden serene and composed, with resolve to complete the work. The power of death was about to be destroyed.

While it is true that Jesus himself benefited from his own sacrifice, all that he did that day was for us. Hebrews says in 2:18: "For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to aid those who are tempted". We cannot say that any of our temptations are worse than his. We cannot say that any part of our life is harder than his. What we can say is that the Lord Jesus understands all the difficulties that we may carry and he is able to lift us out of those difficulties. We have a great high priest, through whom "we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

The Exhortation for Us

That night in the Garden, the disciples slept. The men who said they would never deny Jesus and would die for him (verse 35) could not even stay awake

in his greatest hour of need.

We too fall well short of our ideals. We have a desire to follow Christ, wherever that may take us, but we fail and fall short of the mark. That is why we come together each week to remember our Lord in the eating of bread and drinking of wine. We eat the bread in memory of the devotion of the Lord's life to His Father's will and to encourage us to show the same self-sacrifice of the flesh as our Lord. We drink the wine in memory of our Lord's life poured out, so that we may have forgiveness and a hope of everlasting life.

We do this "until he comes" to gain encouragement to be his disciples in word and action.

Points for Discussion on Matthew 26

1. When thanks is given for the bread at the memorial meeting, what should we pray for?
 2. When thanks is given for the wine at the memorial meeting, what should we pray for?
 3. Where elsewhere were the disciples told that they would see Jesus again in Galilee?
 4. Find out the meaning of the word Gethsemane and discuss how it relates to Jesus' time in the Garden. Hint: What trees were growing in the Garden?
1. What other time did Jesus take with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, John and James?