

What is there in any of us that would ever qualify you or me to be a child of the King? Nothing at all! But the gospel is about salvation by grace alone through faith alone in God Triune and for Jesus' sake alone! In view of Jesus' Person and work as God-sent Saviour of sinners, God's Word calls you to realize from your heart your desperate need of the Saviour and that your acceptance with God always is never found in yourself but only always in and with the Saviour alone, through His finished work for sinners as crucified and risen Saviour. You come to God rightly only in looking to Jesus Christ. Trusting Him and not trusting yourself but entrusting your sinful self to Him and His steadfast, caring, and gentle love for sinners is the way of true and eternal salvation. The gospel of grace is not about what we have to offer to God, but what God offers to us in and through Christ Jesus, freely by grace alone through faith alone.

The gospel message of Jesus Christ is the only hope for this sinful world, and no sinner's case is hopeless at all when you go to Jesus, confessing all and telling all to Him. This is the gospel! Do you need to hear it this hour? My friend, don't continue in sin and unbelief, don't go on trying to make yourself worthy enough but come as an unworthy sinner, pleading and trusting only the worthiness of Christ. Let His steadfast, caring, and gentle love draw you now. Jesus is the only Saviour for sinners and there is no other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, says Peter in Acts 4. How living in sin and unbelief even a day longer should leave you exceedingly sorrowful and awaken you to come to your senses before you become eternally exceedingly sorry with no more hope of salvation ever again. How terrible that would be especially when God in Christ so called you to be saved from sin and to come under His wings, but you would not come.

Consider the Saviour and His steadfast, caring, gentle love towards His disciples, such sinners in themselves. The gospel truth is Jesus Christ, the once crucified but now risen and ever exalted Saviour, is the only God-sent and God-approved Saviour and He is mighty to save all who come to Him, drawn by His love. Are you drawn to Him, and if so, are you living that many more might come to know and believe on Him, Jesus Christ the Lord? Amen.

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

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Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



THE WHOLE PICTURE OF JESUS' LIFE AND MINISTRY

Listen to these words of Jesus in Matthew 17:22-23 to His disciples. *"The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry"*. Jesus here is preparing His disciples for what was to come. He shows them the whole picture of what His life and ministry would be about. He did this a number of times, especially in the last half year of His ministry when He focused also on teaching and training His disciples. In Matthew 16:21 we read, *"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."* Remember that on the Mount of Transfiguration, according to Luke 9:31, Moses and Elijah spoke to Jesus *"of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem"*. When they came down the mountain, Jesus commanded Peter, James, and John, *"Tell the vision (what you have seen and heard), to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."*[Matthew 17:9] It is clear Jesus is focusing His disciples' attention on what will happen soon and we read in our Scripture passage that His words made them exceedingly sorry [sorrowful]. That means they became very sad, distressed, and depressed because of Jesus' serious message.

As we think now further about Jesus showing the whole picture of what His ministry would involve as Messiah and Saviour of sinners, my prayer is that it won't leave anyone in this gospel day exceedingly sorrowful, but exceedingly glad. Yes, for consider with me from our text passage the love shown by Jesus here in teaching His disciples about His saving work as suffering, triumphant Saviour of sinners. Specifically we might say Jesus shows here His steadfast love, His caring love, and His gentle love. Jesus showing the whole picture here of His saving work demonstrates His steadfast love, His caring love, and His gentle love as Saviour of sinners.

Jesus' words left a real impact on the disciples. *"The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again, and they were exceeding sorry."* To see Jesus' steadfast love in these words to them, just think for a moment of what this meant for Jesus Himself. The fact is, Jesus knew the suffering and death that was awaiting Him, and as He came closer to the date of His crucifixion, known beforehand already to the Father and the Son, then Jesus as a human

being is realizing it and foreseeing it. As his crucifixion drew nearer, Jesus thought about it more and more. This truth is worth meditating on. When you are having a special happy event in the future, how exciting that is and how good it is to look forward to that event. For example, think of getting married or taking a dream vacation. But what if instead of expected pleasure, you had to face a serious operation, maybe even a death squad or the electric chair? You agree, that would not be something you would be eagerly looking forward to and, if you could, you would try to avoid something like that altogether. When something awful is facing us in the future, it is very hard not to be thinking of that all the time and not to be overwhelmed with it before the time.

Jesus foresaw and foreknew what was awaiting Him, nothing less than a most agonizing shameful death on a wooden cross. Worst of all, Jesus knew He would bear the divine punishment for sin in the place of sinners. He would be made a curse and be forsaken even by God His Father. When Jesus as the Christ, the God-sent Messiah, would lay down His life a ransom for many as the 'just for the unjust', what inexpressibly horrible anguish of body and soul He would have to suffer and endure, nothing less than the equivalent of the torments of eternal hell. Jesus was facing this all as God-appointed and God-anointed Saviour of sinners and the closer Jesus came to the time when He would give His life, the clearer it became what He would have to suffer, and the more Jesus also shared it with His disciples.

And now to see His steadfast love also with the announcement in Matthew 17:22&23, consider with me how Jesus didn't shrink away from going to Jerusalem and fulfilling the work given Him to do, but He steadily and willingly, yes, constantly and voluntarily, went on towards the very place where He knew He would be led as a lamb to the slaughter. Jesus didn't run away from this mission. The people for whom He would give His life were so undeserving of His saving work, and they didn't ask for it either. But Jesus went on to give His life a ransom for many for the honour of God the Father, and out of love to God and love to sinners. Hear Jesus showing the whole picture to His disciples, and see Him, not running away from His work, but pursuing it in steadfast love, that He might truly and endlessly be the Saviour of sinners.

Jesus' words about His forthcoming death and His repeated focus on that prove His steadfast love for sinners. Jesus came to do what the Father sent Him to do, and He would let no one and nothing turn Him away from His one time saving work on behalf of sinners. Do you see Jesus' steadfast love in His showing the whole picture to His disciples while at the same time continuing His course towards Jerusalem in complete fulfillment of His saving work?

Notice next with me how Jesus' words also show His caring love. Jesus spoke these words, as well as the other announcements about His suffering and death, not for Himself really, but for His disciples to prepare

them for what was to come. The fact is they had understood so little yet of the real nature and meaning of Jesus being the Messiah. They still thought so often in earthly terms and resisted any notion that the Messiah must suffer and die. But Jesus caringly keeps instructing them, progressively teaching them not only that His death was a necessity, but it would be a certainty. "*The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.*" It seems that with Jesus repeatedly bringing the matter up, the disciples were beginning to get the point and unlike the time when Peter rebuked the Lord, this time there is not so much protest to His words, but just great sadness with His words. The seriousness and sureness with which Jesus spoke left an impression of alarm with the disciples. From the other gospel accounts we know that at this time the disciples still did not understand Jesus' words, but hearing it over and over, He was still preparing them more and more for things to come.

Jesus caringly forewarned His disciples about His suffering and death so that when it would happen, it would not be too great a shock and would not overwhelm them in hopeless despair. The closer they came to the day of Jesus' crucifixion and death, the more the Lord revealed that it was coming, and that it had to be so. Do you see Jesus' steadfast and caring love towards His disciples even as He headed towards the cross?

Don't we see Jesus' caring love in also including, with each announcement about His suffering and death, the reality that He would also rise again from the dead too? Jesus never gave a picture without leaving the bright message of the empty tomb as part of it but, as we shall notice, it seems that part was missed altogether by the disciples.

Yes, notice here yet our third point, namely, Jesus' gentle love in showing the whole picture. What I mean here is we are told that the disciples became very sad, exceedingly sorrowful, with Jesus' words about His coming suffering and death and is that the response they should have had? Not if they understood the whole picture as God intended it and as Jesus meant it. Jesus was laying down His life to save sinners! And hadn't Jesus also said He would be raised up again the third day? Jesus was telling them the best news ever and the whole gospel message of the Bible! God's saving work in redemptive history was about to come to its climax giving reason for endless adoration and jubilation but we read, "*and they were exceeding sorry.*" What a response! But Jesus in gentle love didn't take it personally and didn't lose His temper with His disciples who were slow to understand. He just went on training them and continued heading steadfastly to Jerusalem for His once for all sacrifice.

What can we learn from this text? What a gracious and glorious Saviour of sinners Jesus is! Isn't there every reason wholly to trust Him to be also your Saviour from all your sins and sinfulness?

If you look at yourself, you will find, if you are honest, all kinds of reasons why you are most undeserving for God to receive you as His child.