

(Matt. 26:1-2) – The Lord had just been talking about His glorious second advent, the end of the world, the day of judgment, and the eternal states of the righteous and the wicked. Now, He directs their attention to His own crucifixion and death. He reminds them that, before He reigns as the King of glory, He must die as the Surety and Substitute for His sheep. Before He takes His crown of universal rule, He must endure and satisfy the wrath of God as their sin-offering for their sins imputed to Him. Before He could sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, He must put away the sins of His people by the sacrifice of Himself, and He must establish the only righteousness by which God could be both just and the Justifier of ungodly sinners. The focal point of the whole Bible is glorious Person and finished work of Jesus Christ to secure the complete salvation of all whom the Father chose and gave to Him before the foundation of the world (John 6:37-45). The Lord God sovereignly designed all the events of providence to bring about this great transaction. The way that He would be brought to this point was by being betrayed by Judas Iscariot who, though he claimed to be a disciple of Christ, was the betrayer of Jesus from the beginning (John 6:64,70).

(Matt. 26:3-5) – Here we see the sad depraved state of unbelievers, especially those who are consumed with false religion of salvation by the works and the wills of men. These priests, scribes, elders, and the high priest should have been the first ones to recognize that Jesus was (and is) the true and only Messiah. They should have led the people to look to and bow to Christ as the hope of Israel, the only true Savior of sinners. But, like all of us by nature, they would not receive the truth of Christ crucified and risen from the dead because it exposed their hope of salvation as false and deadly to the souls of men (John 3:19-20; 5:39-47; 8:31-59; 1 Cor. 2:14). None of us would receive and believe in Christ if left to our own ways and wills (John 1:12-13; 6:44; Rom. 3:10-12). In their hatred for Jesus and His truth, they *“CONSULTED THAT THEY MIGHT TAKE JESUS BY SUBTILTY, AND KILL HIM.”* Being full of self-righteousness but religious, they realized that if they did this on the Passover, it would cause rebellion among their followers, so they waited till later.

(Matt. 26:6-7) – Here we see the Lord *“IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE LEPER,”* probably a man whom Christ had healed, and a woman who had *“AN ALABASTER BOX OF VERY PRECIOUS OINTMENT”* with which she anointed His head. The significance of this is to show the great contrast between the unbelief and hatred of the religious leaders and the God-given faith in and love for Christ this woman expressed towards Him. Both faith in and love for Christ and His truth are gifts from God (Eph. 2:8-10). These are not qualities that are natural to fallen sinners, nor are they the product of our works or our “free-will” choices (Rom. 9:16). Again, if left to ourselves

and our own natural choices, we would all reject and hate the true Christ and His Gospel as it leaves us no room to boast in ourselves. God's free and sovereign grace makes the difference between those who believe in and love Christ and those who reject and hate Christ.

(Matt. 26:8-13) – Recognizing how expensive this ointment was, the disciples became indignant and asked, *“TO WHAT PURPOSE IS THIS WASTE?”* They reasoned that it could have been sold and the money *“GIVEN TO THE POOR.”* This may have sounded noble and charitable on their part, but their judgment of this woman was totally wrong. Christ knew this woman's heart (her motive which was to comfort and serve Him, her Savior and Master). He admonished them – *“WHY TROUBLE YE THE WOMAN? FOR SHE HATH WROUGHT A GOOD WORK UPON ME.”* The Lord called her actions a “good” work. We know that unjustified and unbelieving persons can do not “good” works in God's sight. All they can do is bring forth fruit unto death (Rom. 7:5). But God's people, justified by His grace through the blood and righteousness of Christ, and who have been born again by the Holy Spirit and brought to faith in Christ, bring forth, by God's power, grace, and goodness, fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4). A “good” work is the work of God in and through His people, done for His glory in Christ, and motivated by grace, love, and gratitude.

Christ went on to say, *“FOR YE HAVE THE POOR ALWAYS WITH YOU; BUT ME YE HAVE NOT ALWAYS.”* Here we see that it is not the mission of the church on earth to relieve all poverty. We know that as God's people we are to be generous in helping others, especially our brethren in Christ who are in need. But the mission of the church on earth until Christ returns is to preach the Gospel seeking and edifying Christ's sheep. Christ then says, *“IN THAT SHE HATH Poured THIS OINTMENT ON MY BODY, SHE DID IT FOR MY BURIAL.”* Here He indicates again, by her anointing Him, the necessity and significance of His death for the salvation of His people, God's elect all over the world, and shows that *“WHEREVER THIS GOSPEL SHALL BE PREACHED ... BE TOLD FOR A MEMORIAL OF HER.”* In the preaching of the Gospel she would be memorialized, not personally, but as a great example of how God's saves sinners by His free and sovereign grace based on the righteousness of Christ imputed, and how the godly motives of faith, love, grace, and gratitude are imprinted upon the hearts of God's people by the Holy Spirit through the Word of truth in Christ.

(Matt. 26:14-16) – This is where Judas bargained with the chief priests to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. This was all in fulfillment of prophecy (Psa. 41:9; Zech. 11:12-13), and in fulfillment of God's plan for the salvation of His people. Judas meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.