

Why share these predictions with the disciples?

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[0 : 0 0] predictions and forecasts and the like are they're not very much a part of our lives they suppose they always were but predictions are something that we look for and we spend a lot of time thinking through you're a football fan you go on match of the day then you'll spend maybe 15 minutes watching football and then you'll spend the next 15 or 20 minutes listening to the pundits analyse the football and then give predictions you don't even need to go to a match of the day on the TV to do that it's in Brown's shop this week past and Margaret said to me football, football, football it's all I ever hear about this team and that team and the next team how they're going to do and how they've done and everything predictions some people she says would stand for all day long speaking about how the team's going to do next weekend nobody in particular think about the news not football maybe but the news we watch the news each night we're gripped by the headlines we're anxious to know what's happening in the world and what's going on and then as the news goes on you get towards the end there's the smaller stories there's the kind of in-depth politics we're maybe not so interested in that but you don't switch it off because you're waiting for the forecast the predictions what's the weather going to do over the next couple of days and we spend a lot of time talking about that think about city life we see the men and women in the suits the stock exchange what is it they're doing?

well they're taking information they're making predictions on how the market will rise and fall and they're seeking to make money on the basis of the predictions and the accuracy of the predictions that they have so predictions are something that we're familiar with something that we we look for and we give thought to and in the remainder of the chapter that's before us the section that we read today as John 13 develops we listen to Jesus making predictions he's made various predictions already in the gospel but there are two very clear predictions that Jesus makes in the verses that we read in verses 18 to 30 Jesus predicts his betrayal his betrayal then in verses 31 through to verse 39 Jesus predicts his denial and his denier but Jesus' predictions weren't that kind of finger in the air style thing where we don't know whether they're going to come to pass or not Jesus had that supernatural knowledge of God he knew he knew what was before him what he was sharing with the disciples in terms of predictions were not things that may or may not come to pass he knew that what he was predicting would soon be a reality and so today I want to consider these predictions of Jesus and there's two questions that I want to consider in relation to them we'll spend much more time on the first one and the second question is why did Jesus share these predictions with his disciples I've got them on the screen why did Jesus share these predictions with his disciples that's what we'll give most of our time to and then the second question is in light of the predictions and what he knew was ahead of him why did he not change his course so first question why did Jesus share these predictions of his denial and his betrayal and his death and all of these things with the disciples and it must have been hard for Jesus to speak about these things as he considered the prospect of all the intense suffering that was before him and it must have been hard for the disciples who were gathered around that table to listen to the things that Jesus had to say to them so why did he feel the need to share these things there's three answers to that or three answers that I want to focus on and the first answer is Jesus shared these predictions with them to show them that he knew them personally and yet he still loved them he was thinking about them as individuals and he wanted them to know that he knew them and yet he still loved them and the focus is on two disciples in particular in these verses Judas and Peter and Jesus knew them both he knew them better even than they knew themselves Jesus knew Judas Jesus knew what none of the other disciples could actually see Judas it seems was the master hypocrite his acting skills were absolutely flawless but as we are taken behind the scenes by John the emerging truth for us as readers of John's gospel is that

Judas does not believe Judas wasn't a believer Judas did not trust Christ that's why verses 10 and 11 his heart was not clean and none of the other disciples could see that none of the other disciples suspected it in any way at all we can see that from their responses Jesus shares with them about the betrayal they didn't all say Judas they all said is it me could it be me the disciples couldn't see what Jesus saw maybe even Judas couldn't clearly see what Jesus saw but Jesus could see it because Jesus knew Judas and this isn't something I was going to speak about but just a little point in teaching as we think about our own lives and think about our own hearts so I was thinking about [6:56] Judas and this catastrophic fall this was not an instantaneous landslide this was a bit by bit by bit slip into sin because even as we as we look back in John 12 we remember Mary breaking the perfume over Jesus and washing his feet Judas objects why did this happen why couldn't the money this 60,000 pounds the commentators reckon in our cash why couldn't this have been spent on the poor such extravagance and we're told he didn't say that because he cared about the poor he said that because he was pocketing some of the cash the love of money was taking hold in Judas' heart maybe just a fleeting thought just a desire that he acquiesced but it took root and it went deeper and it went deeper and it went deeper and now we find Judas at the table not sincere not loving

Christ not trusting Christ but plotting in his mind such love of money what will my fee be for his denial his betrayal the other disciples couldn't see it that's just a point for us to watch be ruthless with sin might just be a thought might just be a glance might just be something that we think we've got under control but bit by bit by bit there was devastation and John wants us to see that as he requires that incident Jesus knew Judas Jesus secondly he knew Peter and Peter was very different to Judas in the sense that Peter was sincere Peter was genuine Peter was well meaning but for Peter the big problem seems to have been pride in his heart that's what we can surmise from all that we see in

Peter as we follow his course Peter always wants to be the one in the spotlight Peter always seems to be the first to speak often when he shouldn't speak Peter always wants to be seen and heard and noticed it's just that wee bit better than the other disciples and I think that's what's fueling what he says in verse 37 and he just glanced at it in verse 37 Peter he makes this huge claim I will lay down my life for you and you can just imagine Peter looking around in the room the others I don't know if they'll be able to say that but Lord I can say that I'll lay down my life for you you know me fearless uncompromising I will lay everything down for you Jesus huge claim and I believe in the moment Peter he meant it but he couldn't he couldn't live it out speaking to someone on

Friday they'd gone out for lunch they'd piled up their plate with food and by the end of the meal when they were absolutely full to the brim still half a portion of food still on their plate they were saying it was very embarrassing when the waiter came along you know my eyes were bigger than my stomach mundane illustration but for Peter his words were massively bigger than his actions and Jesus knew that and Jesus knew that before the morning Peter would be choking on his words as he would protest with curses that he did not know Jesus but Jesus knew Peter and Jesus knew Judas and Jesus knows you and Jesus knows me he knows you better than your friends know you and your family know you or your spouse knows you he knows you better than you know you and if you doubt that start reading your Bible and ask that God the Spirit would deal with you because when we come to

God's Word in that Spirit what we find as we read the Bible is not so much that we're reading the Bible but it's as if the Bible is reading us scanning our lives delving into our hearts and telling us about our thoughts before we even think them and that is what's happening it's happening because God knows us and he knows what we need to hear he knows us warts and all and yet he loves us and he reaches out to us as he did to Peter and as he did to Judas I just find it staggering to think about the fact that in spite of everything that Jesus knew about Judas still here he's reaching out to him he's giving him the chance to repent right to the last moment think about last

[13:09] Sunday morning if you were here Craig diaries he spoke he spoke about Isaiah 49 he spoke about Jesus in the context of Isaiah 49 how tempting it must have been for Jesus to let the kind of discouragement that we focused on that discouragement of Isaiah 49 set in as he saw this sorry crew of disciples before him Peter for all his words and yet he's going to come to nothing and Judas sitting there as if butter wouldn't melt and yet he's plotting all this in his heart how tempting it must have been for Jesus in his humanity in his deeply troubled state as it records in verse 21 how tempting for Jesus to say I've laboured for no purpose I've spent my strength in vain and for nothing

Isaiah 49 4 how tempting it must have been for him in the agony of that and what he was going to just to drive these disciples away and leave me in peace and yet

Jesus was sinless as we heard he didn't give in to that discouragement he doesn't drive him away and even in this last encounter for Judas in washing his feet in handing him the sop the bread Jesus is so lovingly and so tenderly reaching out to him before night set eternally in Judas's soul I was reading John Stott on this and I thought this quote was just such a powerful quote to transport us into that place he tells us about the actual act of giving the bread and Stott says the gift of a tit bit by the host at such a meal was a mark of special favour thus even as he unmasks the traitor Jesus reaches out to him in a final astonishing act of loving friendship and appeal this gesture is further augmented if as appears to be the case verse 26 Judas was within arm's reach of Jesus through occupying the place on his other side the host's left the place of special honour for one last lingering moment Judas's destiny hangs in the balance as the love of God incarnate shines one more time into his benighted heart but the moment is no snare present than it passes as Judas in a final act of defiance closes his heart against the light and turns away into the darkness the last encounter the last opportunity as

Christ reaches out in love and grace and yet Judas defies him is it possible this morning that this is the last encounter for somebody with Jesus is it possible for someone that Jesus has with great patience and grace and tenderness and love been ministering to you time and time again and yet you've resisted him repeatedly we never know when that last encounter may come so today as Christ reaches out to you through his word and by his spirit don't resist him don't shun him don't risk that final darkness of soul that could be set don't gamble with eternity don't play fast and loose with the prospect of hell but come in repentance and in faith to this same Jesus who knows you and who loves you and who grids you come to for salvation

[18 : 41] I'm going to stop there let's pray our heavenly father we we thank you for your word and we thank you for the seriousness and the profound depth that your word has we thank you that in these moments we are taken into that holy place where Christ ministers to those whom he loved to some who loved him and to some who had determined that they would resist him and sell him and seek satisfaction in the love of money

Lord we think about the reality of that last encounter that last call that Judas heard with his ears and yet didn't seem to hear in his heart and Lord we pray for each person here you know us and you are speaking this morning through your word and the power of the spirit and some of you have been speaking to for many months and years some of you have taken to that place where they understand their sin and where they understand that Jesus died to save the sinner to understand something understand enough of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and yet to date have been resisting you heavenly father we pray that even today these people would see the absolute urgency of not hardening their hearts for receiving the salvation that is offered to us whilst there is time whilst it is day whilst there is opportunity so for those who are still in a lost state as we sit here just now

Lord we pray that in love you would show them and in love you would reach them and Lord that they would follow you into salvation into eternal light and life and father for those of us who are following you and who are trusting you we see so much of Peter in ourselves we can speak the words we can make the professions we can sit even at the table and yet Lord how often we fail and how often we fall and how often we are choking on the very words that we may have spoken cleanse us we pray as you cleansed Peter make us clean we pray and give us courage Lord that we would walk close with you and that we would take every opportunity to speak of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in these days glorify yourself through us we pray and we pray in Jesus name Amen grace on■■■■