



Suicide, Anxiety, & Depression

(The Gospel changes everything)

Part 4

Tonight, we cover the toughest of our topics, that being **suicide** (Latin: of oneself, a killing), which could be called **self-murder**. This topic is highly controversial because it carries serious, eternal implications and raises profound questions. We've seen over the past few weeks that some of our greatest heroes of the faith wished or hoped for death. We can see this is a real and common human reaction to intense heartache. When someone experiences **suicidal tendencies**, where they fanaticize about the action, or actually act on those thoughts, it can be for one of several reasons; **depression**, **mental illness-psychosis**, **impulsiveness** (drugs & alcohol abuse), **a cry for help, mistakes** (failures), **traumatic stress** (war/PTSD, abuse; child, physical, verbal, sexual), **loss of a person/relationship** (untimely death, break-up or divorce), or the feeling of being **burdensome** (unlovable) to others.

Outside of our salvation in Christ, there's no greater gift from God than the gift of life, and have no doubt, to consider throwing it away is a serious **offense** towards God. *Does that mean it cannot be forgiven? Is it an unpardonable sin? Does a person who commits suicide prove by their actions that they are not a Christian? Is suicide the ultimate lack of faith?* We'll study God's Word and attempt to answer these weighty questions.

Suicide: Matthew 27:3-5, Luke 22:1-6, John 12:1-8, & Acts 1:18-19.

Judas Iscariot; betrayal/regret/remorse/guilt/suicide

- Tonight, we examine the life of perhaps the greatest human **villain** portrayed in the Scriptures: **Judas Iscariot**.
- Unlike many of the other 12 disciples, not much is known about the origin story of Judas. We actually have no details of his **calling** as a disciple, unlike **Peter, Andrew, James, John, Matthew, Nathanael/Bartholomew, and Philip**.
- The surname **Iscariot** tells us **where** he was **from**. Unlike many of the other disciples, Judas was not from Cana/Galilee; he was from the southern part of **Judea**, called **Kerioth**. This town is first mentioned during the time of **Joshua** (Joshua 15:25) when the Israelites were dividing the Promised Land among the various tribes.
- So, Judas Iscariot's name means *Judas from Kerioth*, and **John 6:71, 13:2, 26** tells us that his father's name was **Simon**.

- **John 12:1-8** gives us an understanding of who Judas was ***inwardly***:
 - Mary anoints Jesus' feet with an expensive perfume and wipes His feet with her hair.
 - Judas ***objects*** to the ***extravagance*** of her love offering.
 - He said the perfume, which was worth a year's wages (300 denarii), should have been sold and the money given to the poor.
 - We are told in **verse 6** that his objection was not because he cared for the poor.
 - He was the money keeper (treasurer) & was habitually stealing from the money bag.
 - Unknown to Mary, what she had done was to prepare Jesus for His burial.
- *Why would Jesus choose this **outsider**, this **thief**, to oversee their offerings? Was Jesus ignorant of the fact that Judas was stealing? Was Jesus setting Judas up to fail? Was Judas ever a real follower of Christ, or did he just go through the motions?*
 - Jesus was/is God, so He obviously knew that Judas was stealing from them/Him.
 - Jesus gave Judas the ***choice*** of which God to serve (Luke 16:13, Matthew 26:23-24).
 - Judas ***responded*** to the call to follow; he made a positive commitment, he was a ***follower***, but not a true ***disciple***/new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).
 - Judas had the same ***opportunity*** as the other 11 disciples (Acts 1:16).
 - Judas ***witnessed*** the miraculous power of Jesus and heard all His teachings.
 - Judas, along with the other 11, was sent out to preach the Gospel and perform miracles (Matthew 10:1-10). Yes, at one time, Judas did ministry.
 - Judas chose to follow his ***own*** way and not ***THE*** WAY (John 14:6).
 - Judas sought to betray Jesus; no one forced him. (Matthew 26:14-16).
 - Judas felt ***remorse***, not ***repentance***, over the betrayal, and returned the silver (Matthew 27:3-5). ***Repentance*** would've drawn him to the Savior's feet at the cross.
 - Judas committed suicide (Matthew 27:5b, Acts 1:18). No ***contradiction*** in stories.
 - Despite more recent attempts to ***rewrite*** Judas's ***intentions***, all the Gospel writers agree that Judas was a ***traitor*** and betrayed Jesus out of his own free will.
- Judas is one of **7 biblical figures** to commit suicide: **1. King Abimelech**-Judges 9:54, **2. Samson**-Judges 16:30, **3. King Saul**-1 Samuel 31:4, **4. King Saul's unnamed armor-bearer**- 1 Samuel 31:5, **5. Ahithophel** (counselor of King David/Absalom)-2 Samuel 17:23, **6. King Zimri**-1 Kings 16:18, and **7. Judas Iscariot**-Matthew 27:5
- **Is suicide a sin?** The answer is simpler than you might think, but it needs to be asked differently. **Is suicide murder?** Murder is the deliberate killing of someone without cause. According to the 10 Commandments, yes, **suicide is a sin.**
- **Can it be forgiven?** The answer here could be harder to understand. The question here is: *Does a sin have to be repented of to be forgiven?* If you say, of course, then how can we say that Jesus died and covered/atoned for all our sins on the cross? Does saying that we're sorry really mean we're sorry? If we can never mutter the words to ask for forgiveness (b/c of death), then can such a sin be forgiven? Jesus' sacrifice covers all sins, past, present, and future, for all believers.
- **Is suicide a sin like any other sin?** All sins are sin, biblically, but some sins have much weightier consequences than others. This sin ***supplants*** the sanctification process and removes the chance for future maturity and growth.
- **Is suicide a lack of faith?** Most certainly, suicide is a lack of faith, as all fear-based decisions are, but that doesn't absolutely mean it is a final denial or cancellation of faith. A person is ***short-sighted***, as they are throwing away one of God's greatest gifts based on their current feelings, which will change over time. *Do you want to put the Lord's grace and mercy to the test?*

- ***Does suicide prove that you are not a true believer?*** This is one of the toughest questions to bring clarity to. We are told twice (Luke 22:3-4, John 13:2, 27) that Satan ***influenced and entered*** Judas:
 - **Luke 22:3** says Satan entered Judas.
 - **John 13:2** says Satan had already prompted (tempted) Judas to betray Jesus.
 - **John 13:27** says, *“As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.”*
 - We can say with certainty that Satan ***cannot*** enter a true believer (Job), but Satan can ***tempt*** and ***entice*** (John 10:28).
 - Looking at all 7 of the biblical suicide examples, we see very few appear to have true, saving faith in God (Samson or Saul?). Instead, we see a picture of God’s sovereign will being accomplished despite, and even through, their sinful actions.
- ***If we commit suicide, do we go to heaven or hell?*** As we mentioned earlier, we could die in any number of ways with unconfessed sins in our lives/hearts, and that does not negate the grace and mercy shown to us on the cross. To say otherwise is to make our faith works-based, and not grace-based. If a true believer, who has truly repented, followed Christ, and become a new creation in Christ, in a moment of weakness and stress, foolishly takes their own life, then by the utmost grace of God, their soul’s destination will still be heaven. However, as we mentioned earlier, there is a better way, and we are instructed multiple times throughout the Scriptures not to put the Lord to the test.

Experiencing depression, anxiety, stress, and even suicidal thoughts are common to mankind, but that is not an excuse to live there. Over the past three weeks, we have seen God’s great **power, provision, and promises** laid out in the stories of Job, Moses, and Elijah. The life of Judas is not a success story, but it is a real story.

What can we learn from Judas’ life? First, when our expectations aren’t met, take them to God in ***prayer*** and then ***compare*** them to the scriptures. If they don’t line up with His Word and His promises, adjust your expectations and lean on His promises and strength. Second, seek ***help***. If you can’t seem to shake the doldrums of depression and despair, there’s always someone who cares for and loves you. Openly talk with them. Third, seek ***spiritual*** counseling. Don’t assume everyone knows what’s going on inside your head. Never feel like a burden. Never feel like you’ve gone too far, sinned too much, or that you’re unlovable. Fourth, remember that you are made in the very image of God Almighty, and He chose you and has an amazing plan for your life. Your value and worth are not in what you see in the mirror, what relationships you have or don’t have, how many resources you have, your career, or any other thing.

Find your value and worth in ***Christ*** alone.



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Find your value and worth in _____ alone.