

John 12:3-8

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

KJV

With all of the graduations occurring right now I thought that I would share with you my commencement speech. Commencement does not mean the end. It means the beginning. Most commencement addresses are about the possible achievements of students and challenge them to fulfill their promise.

Can you be trusted to be alone?

Can you be trusted when...?

- You are alone with your thoughts?
- You are alone with your words?
- You are alone with your motives?
- You are alone with a young lady?
- You are alone with a computer, a T.V., a Book, a radio or iPod, a cell phone, a movie?
- You are alone with your friends or your peers?
- You are alone with my money?

Judas Iscariot could not be trusted to be alone. When he was alone with the money box that belonged to the poor, he stole from it. We all know what became of Judas Iscariot. It could be argued that he is the most well known disciple of Jesus.

Who and what you will become in the future will be determined by how you conduct yourself when you are alone!

I am not saying this to condemn you. I am saying this because I want to help you change. I want you to be a believer who can be trusted when you are alone. I want you to have a brighter future than Judas Iscariot.

We all have a secret life and we have all failed in our secret life. We have all done things in secret that we would not want everyone to know about.

When we are a child, responsible parents protect us from ourselves by not letting us be alone. As you become a teen, parents approach this decision differently. Some Godly parents take what many would consider extreme measures to keep their youth from being

alone with anything that could harm them. Other Godly parents are more lenient and give their children more freedom to be alone with things that could harm them. Even if your parents are very strict, you will still find yourself alone with something that could harm you. Then once you leave home, you will experience a whole new level of freedom. With that freedom there will be a whole new level of temptations.

Can you be trusted to be alone?

How we conduct our self in our secret life reveals so much about our relationship with Jesus.

There are two motivations that keep us pure when you are alone. One is fear. The other is love.

Fear is a very powerful motivation. It is why parents tell their children the consequences of their conduct. I remember a program to help juvenile delinquents called scared straight. They would take young people into prisons and have the inmates speak to them.

But the mind has an amazing capacity to dismiss fear. It is one reason why so many people never repent even though they have heard a sermon on hell. Their minds dismiss the fear that has been created by the preacher by simply questioning the truth of what has been said. They choose not to believe the preacher so they lose the motivation of fear to consider the claims of the gospel.

Fear loses its power when you do not believe anyone is watching and you believe you will not get caught. That is why we teach other Christians that God is always watching. We try to create a fear of God to motivate Christians so they can be trusted when they are alone. We teach that every sin has a consequence and it does because God is watching.

If there is not accountability to anyone else, there is always accountability to God.

Do you fear God? If you do, then you can be trusted when you are alone. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

Prov 9:10

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

KJV

But there is a better motivation than fear to make us trustworthy when we are alone. It is the motivation of love.

1 John 4:18

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

KJV

For example a man can be trusted with a computer if he loves his wife. A teen ager can be trusted with their parent's car if they love their parents. When you love someone, you do not want to do anything to hurt them or their reputation.

The most powerful motivation in the world is love for God. It motivates us to be trustworthy when we are alone even when we do not believe our conduct will injure anyone else. It motivates us to love even our enemies.

People who love Jesus can be trusted when they are alone!

Alone with their thoughts?

Alone with their words?

Alone with their motives?

Alone with a young lady?

Alone with a computer, a T.V., a Book, a radio or IPod, a cell phone, a movie?

Alone with their friends or their peers?

Alone with someone else's money?

This was Judas Iscariots problem. He did not love Jesus.

If your future will be determined by how you conduct yourself when you are alone, then whether or not you love Jesus is going to determine what your future is going to look like.

Loving Jesus is not just your choice. Loving Jesus is a work of God that He initiates by loving you.

Your faith is His love for you will determine the measure of your love for Him.

That is why Paul prayed for the church to know the love of God. Paul knew that their knowledge and faith in His love would determine whether or not they could be trusted when they were alone.

Love is not static. It can grow and it can decrease.

You discover a lot about your faith in God's love for you when you go thru difficult trials. It is very hard to reconcile our most difficult sufferings with God's love for us.

There is no question that we can bring a lot of suffering upon ourselves by our imperfections. I do it almost every day. But what about those times when we suffer and we cannot make the connection between what we are suffering our imperfections?

We will all suffer many things in which there is no correlation between our faith and obedience and what we are suffering. We did nothing to cause it and we can do nothing to resolve it.

How then do we believe God loves us?

Some say we should not. Some say there must not be a God of love like the one that is described in the bible. They dismiss their fears of eternity and accountability to God for how they live their life by using their mind to dismiss the claims of the bible because they see the innocent suffer.

The only sure foundation we have for believing that God loves us is Jesus and the cross.

Heb 6:19

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

KJV

There is no other sure way to measure God's love for us.

If you try to measure God's love for you in any other way, your faith is on a very weak foundation that will give way at some point in your life.

The wonderful thing about the cross is that the depths of its riches can never be fully explored or discovered. There is always more to learn about the love of God for us thru Jesus and the cross. It should be our meditation day and night because it is the anchor of our soul.

Judas could not be trusted when he was alone. He did not know the love of Christ.

Do you?

Can you be trusted when you are alone?

If you know Jesus and His love for you, you can be trusted. Your faith in His love for you keeps you from sin.

If you do not know God's love for you thru Jesus Christ, all of your religious instruction will not prevent you from falling over and over again when you are alone.

You will find yourself living a double life and doing the right thing only when you are motivated by the temporary presence of the fear of God or the fear of man.

Is it any wonder the church of Jesus Christ has lost so much ground in our nation?

If we are defeated when we are alone, we have no power to become to others what God intended for us to become!

We lose our savor and we are trampled under the foot of men just like Judas Iscariot.

God has a better plan for you. But you must believe with all your heart that He loves you with all His heart.

Jesus is why you should believe!

Today, I want to pray for you to know the love of God thru Jesus Christ. I want you to repent for basing your faith in God's love on any other foundation but Jesus. I want you to ask God to reveal to you thru Jesus how much He loves you. I want you to start asking God every day to reveal His love for you thru Jesus.