

The Betrayer and the Betrayal

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[0:00] In tonight's lesson, we're going to come face to face with a person that is real easy to hate.

! The very name Judas Iscariot evokes emotions that are troubling, even among unbelievers. A lot of unbelievers don't care for him.

And you know, the word traitor is ugly in any language and in any circumstance. It is no small irony that after a conflict ends, traitors were often shunned by both sides.

In American history, probably the most famous traitor was Benedict Arnold. He became a traitor to the American cause. But it's interesting, after the Revolutionary War, Benedict Arnold basically died in exile in England, scorned by Americans and British alike. I had dinner one night in London with my counterpart at Conoco, before we were Conoco Phillips. And walking back to the hotel, we were kind of in a scary area really. But we kept going, both former FBI agents. And we looked at a house that had a plaque. We walked up and it said the home of the traitor Benedict Arnold. He was a traitor against America. Well, the traitor we are going to look at tonight was far worse than Benedict Arnold. And the Bible is not really clear as to exactly the circumstances surrounding Judas as to when he became a follower of the Lord. We don't know in detail what attracted

Judas to become a follower of Christ. We do know that he basically followed him on a full-time basis. We do know in the 6th chapter of John, when others left the Master, Judas himself chose to remain. Many left and the Scripture says have walked with him no more. But Judas was one of the twelve that stayed with the Lord. The Scriptures though never really portray Judas as a spiritual follower of the Lord. Most likely, Judas held fiercely to what we refer to as the Messianic view concerning the Messiah that he would appear at some point in history, that he would overthrow whoever was oppressing the Jewish nation at that time, and it was always somebody, and that he would then establish his kingdom. They certainly did not see the church. They certainly did not see Gentiles in the church. But they viewed the Messiah as a political and military leader that would restore Israel's sovereignty among the nations. There's perhaps another reason why Judas chose to follow the Lord, and that had to do with greed.

[3:50] He was never interested in the kingdom as a means of bringing salvation to the world. He desired the power, the position, the wealth, and the prestige that came with being near the Messiah.

Now, it's obvious that as time went on, Judas became disillusioned with the Lord. The Lord was spending his time stressing the spiritual aspects of the kingdom, and Judas never had any interest in that.

And certainly, Judas never had any interest in that. And certainly, one of the triggering events, if not the triggering event, that literally put Judas over the top concerning the Lord occurred just prior, just a few days prior to the Lord's Supper, which we've been studying in here, in the upper room, the inner sanctuary.

A dinner was held in Bethany, which is just a few miles from Jerusalem. It was held in honor of Jesus. Mary, the sister of Martha and of the resurrected Lazarus, her brother, it was on that occasion that she anointed the Lord with a large amount of very expensive ointment or perfume. This outraged Judas.

[5:58] That was all up front. He saw this as a way to enrich himself because he held the money box for the group of disciples.

He was the treasurer, so to speak. He wanted to embezzle the money, which is estimated at 300 denarii, amounting to about one year's salary.

A lot of money. A lot of money. And actually, according to Matthew's gospel, some of the other disciples joined with Judas in protesting that this ointment should have been sold instead of used to anoint the Lord.

Now, immediately after the incident with the perfume, Judas seeks out the chief priests, the Jewish leadership in the Sanhedrin, and they begin this dialogue.

And he asked them, what was it worth to them for him to hand over Jesus? They settled on 30 pieces of silver, which, by the way, was the price for a common slave.

[7:21] What a slave cost. Now, Jesus, of course, was in complete, sovereign control of each and every event, even those surrounding Judas.

Nothing took Jesus by surprise, not even when he selected Judas for membership in his band of followers.

He knew who he was. And neither would Jesus hide the treachery of Judas for very long. In fact, he's going to reveal that treachery tonight to us.

The setting for exposing the treachery of Judas was the last meal Jesus would have with his followers prior to his death on the cross.

Jesus had assembled the band of followers, including Judas. We've already studied that the Lord had washed their feet, including Judas.

[8:30] And now, beginning in John chapter 13, verse 18, the Lord turns the dialogue to the betrayer.

And Jesus made this very clear to his followers that he was fully anticipating the treachery. In verse 18, we read, Jesus speaking, Jesus said, or the betrayal.

Had he not made this clear, and it's a very important point, they could have and probably would have wondered how someone claiming the status of the Messiah of God could have so completely misjudged the character of Judas.

You see the dilemma? If Jesus is who he says he is, why couldn't he see Judas coming at him?

The Lord made it very clear that the disciples were clean, but not all of them.

In the exchange we looked at a few weeks ago with Peter, Jesus said, you know, you know, you know, you're clean except you picked up the dust of sin and we need to wash your feet. But he made it clear that one of them was clean.

[10:22] It is also important to understand that Judas was not pre-programmed by God to betray Jesus against his own will, against the will of Judas.

Judas chose and freely chose to do what he did. Judas was fully responsible and accountable for his actions.

Now, the betrayal was predetermined, but Judas acted on his own volition. We may have some difficulty with that. Let me assure you, God's got that all worked out in his own mind.

God understands all that. Jesus had this to say in Luke's Gospel, For indeed the Son of Man is going as it has been determined.

There's God's sovereignty. It's determined the path of Messiah will go down. And then Jesus says, But woe to that man by whom he is betrayed.

[11:33] There we have the responsibility of Judas. That's Luke 22.22, by the way. So here we have the great example of our sovereign God working all things after the counsel of his will.

And if that sounds familiar, that's Ephesians 1.11. He's working all things. And using the wicked plan of Judas to bring about the eternal good of redemption.

Now God can do that. It's just a miracle. But he does it all the time. Now Judas could have turned from his sin. Judas could have repented.

But instead we see him harden his heart. We see him refusing to repent from this horrible sin.

So the Lord in the upper room next informs his followers as to the identity of the betrayer. They didn't have a clue. Beginning in verse 19, the Lord says this, From now on, I am telling you, before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he.

[13:03] Let me tell you what that really says. That you may believe that I am. That's what he said. The he in your Bible should be in italics.

It wasn't in there. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives me, and he who receives him who sent me.

When Jesus said this, he became troubled in spirit and testified and said, Truly, truly, I say to you that one of you will betray me.

That's pretty plain. Even in our languages. One of you is going to betray me. Now, by telling his followers that he knew everything that was going to come about in the future, he was offering to those he had chosen great assurance to his followers, to his disciples, that their faith would not be

shaken.

He told them of the betrayal so they would not become scattered, not become fearful. And he assures them by affixing that great title that goes back all the way to the burning bush of Exodus, that he is the great I am.

[14:37] I am that I am. And he uses that many times, seven or eight times in the Gospel of John alone. That word he does not appear in the text.

He is again affirming his absolute deity in omniscience foreknowledge of all that will occur. Nothing that's going to happen that night or any night since then has caught Jesus off guard or by surprise. And Jesus alludes to the fact that having a betrayer in their midst in no way alters or destroys their credibility as a group or as individuals.

It is not the end of their mission for the Lord. The fact that he's going to be betrayed, handed over to the Jewish leadership who will hand him over to the unbelievers to be crucified.

This is not the end of their mission. It is instead just the beginning. It's just the beginning. Jesus was going, was still going to send his remaining followers to the uttermost parts of the world to take with them the message of the cross.

[15:56] He would even name them apostles, meaning they would appear with full authority on behalf of the one who sent them. That's what apostle means.

They're representing the sovereign. They, like we, were ambassadors for Christ. You remember what an ambassador does, even in our day.

He represents the sovereign in a foreign country. We have ambassadors all over the world representing our president. England has them representing the queen.

We are described as ambassadors for Christ. They, like we, are citizens of heaven and represent the king to a world of lost sinners.

They, like we, live among lost as aliens and strangers. You can read about that at 1 Peter 2, verse 11. Now, having reassured that His true disciples, the Lord next tells them He is deeply troubled because the betrayer is in their midst.

[17:10] Can you imagine if we had 12 here and Mike was up here talking because he's more like Jesus than I am, so we put Mike up here. And he says, you know, I love you guys and you've been so faithful, but one of you is a betrayer.

Oh my gosh, could you imagine? I don't know that we could come to grips with that just seeing those words. But Jesus is troubled.

The only time Jesus is troubled we need to be, right? He's troubled because the betrayer is there in that room. Jesus used a Greek word for troubled meaning He was in severe mental or spiritual turmoil in anguish.

We can never fully know the depth of what was troubling Jesus. Jesus. We do know that He loved Judas. We know that Judas had no corresponding love for Christ.

We do know that Satan was present and the Lord certainly knew that. And we know that Satan would soon enter Judas and possess him.

[18:31] We knew that Judas had a place reserved for him in hell where he would be forever separated from the Father and Jesus knew all of this as well on a level we cannot possibly comprehend in fullness.

Note how the disciples respond to all this. The disciples begin looking at one another. Now, get a hold of that.

It's telling these guys there's a betrayer in here. One of you is going to betray me. And they're looking around. They're at a loss to know which one he was speaking.

There was a reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples whom Jesus loved. And by the way, that's John's title for himself. He never used his name in any of his writings.

Five books in the Bible. So, Simon Peter gestured to him and said to him, tell us who it is of whom he is speaking. In other words, ask the Lord who is the betrayer?

[19:46] And I promise you that was born out of concern, fear. And he, that's John, leaning back with us on Jesus' bosom, said to him, Lord, who is it?

The disciples are stunned at the announcement by Jesus. One of you will betray me. There is confusion in the room.

The words of Dr. Carson, I think, are instructive. The twelve were already somewhat disoriented by Jesus' allusions to his suffering and death. Categories they still could not square with their

conviction that he was the promised Messiah.

Doubtless references to betrayal and treachery seemed similarly obscure. Perhaps some wondered if Jesus were referring some disciples just outside the ring of the twelve.

Maybe some others that had followed along. Others might have wondered if betrayal would be inadvertent. Just made a mistake. And you know, when you see this portrayed from Hollywood, usually Judas just made a couple mistakes that ended up going down this path.

[21 : 00] He didn't really mean to. Which is malarkey. That's a good word to look it up. Perhaps the notion of the betrayal did not seem very threatening to them since their master could calm storms, raise the dead, feed the hungry, and heal the sick.

What possible disaster could befall him that he could not immediately rectify? But this still came as quite a shock to the disciples.

Now let's consider for a moment what they knew. What did these followers of Christ know? They knew that they were all in a room, no doubt with the doors closed, windows, shutters closed, and they were all there with Jesus, and therefore one of them had to be the betrayer.

Because he told them, one of you is going to betray them. So he's in the room with them. They knew that whoever it was was one that had ministered alongside them for three years.

They'd all been involved in this ministry for three years. they knew that the betrayer had just had his feet washed by the Lord of Heaven.

[22 : 20] Jesus, acting the part of the lowest slave, washed their feet, all of them, including the betrayer. They knew that the betrayer had been chosen as an ambassador for Christ.

That he'd been ministering alongside them for these three years. No one knew at this point who the betrayer was except Jesus and Judas.

they both knew. This is a testimony to the effectiveness of the hypocrisy of Judas.

He'd been able to hide this. They didn't suspect him. It is also a tribute to Jesus who treated him kindly and no different than the others.

He didn't treat him any differently than he treated the others. No one knew it was Judas. And instead, they begin looking around and I promise you in their heart of hearts, they're trying to guess who is it?

[23 : 45] Who is it? Now, in the other gospel accounts, we learn that each one thought he could be the betrayer.

Each one. They all saw within themselves the opportunity and the possibility that they were the betrayer.

and I suggest that if the Lord Jesus walked in here tonight and said, I love you guys, but one of you is going to betray me.

One of you will not end up in heaven. We would all be saying, is it I, Lord? Is it I? Peter steps out.

Unusual Peter, right? He steps out and he asks John, John, ask the Lord to identify the betrayer.

[24 : 53] We can't stand this anymore. We need to know who it is. And John makes the inquiry and Jesus responds. Jesus then answered, that is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him.

So when he had dipped the morsel, he took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. After the morsel was given to Judas, Satan then entered into him.

Therefore Jesus said to him, what you do, do quickly. Now no one of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose he had said this to him.

For some were supposing because Jesus had the money box, he controls the money, that Jesus was saying to him, buy the things we have need of for the feast, or else that he should give something to the poor.

So after, that's important, after receiving the morsel, that's bread by the way, he went out immediately and then John writing by the authority of the Holy Spirit adds some interesting words.

[26 : 23] He says and it was night night. It is presumed that Jesus must have spoken softly to John and John alone heard the identity would be the one who received the morsel of bread.

That's who it's going to be. And John didn't have an opportunity yet to convey that. here's what we need to understand sitting in middle America 21st century.

To receive a morsel of bread from the hand of the host was considered a high honor in Middle Eastern banquet etiquette.

It's a very high honor. to receive a morsel of bread from the bread of life is infinitely more honoring.

The bread of life provided the morsel of bread to the betrayer. For his part, Judas spurned this final gesture of love just as he had spurned such gestures for three years.

[27 : 53] Now, several things happened at the very moment Jesus handed the morsel to Judas. The day of salvation ended for Judas for eternity.

Remember, yesterday morning I said, you know, today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow never comes. If it gets here, it's today. The day for Judas ended. He was cut off from salvation for eternity. Hell entered the room in the form of Satan. There could be no doubt that Jesus could save. The others could not. But Satan entered the room and entered Judas and possessed him.

Divine mercy was withdrawn and only divine judgment and wrath remained for Judas. Judas had crossed a line from which there would be no return.

Jesus in fact told him that, you know, Judas, what you're going to do is move very quickly. Move quickly with your betrayal. And the scriptures tell us that Judas went out immediately and he left the upper room, he left the group, he went out immediately.

[29 : 22] Where'd he go? He went and met with the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leadership. And I think by now you all know that the Sanhedrin was the legislative, the judicial, and the executive branch of the Israeli government, the government of the Hebrews.

All in one. And he goes there and they finalized the plans for the arrest of the Lord.

So, what information could Judas provide them? Judas knew that it was the custom of Jesus to retire to the Mount of Olives to pray to his Father.

He knew that was the pattern of Jesus' life. Put that in context. Hey, I know where he's going to be praying to the Father of Heaven here in just a few hours.

You can get him there. is there anything more sinister and more damning than that? And the significance is, this is going to occur late at night, he could be arrested at an hour without any interference from people.

[30 : 47] Jesus had a large following. And that had accelerated with the raising of Lazarus. People knew he had raised a dead mate back to life.

And then John adds a footnote. And he says, it was night. It was night.

Darkness had descended over Jerusalem, but it was more significant darkness that had descended forever over the heart of Judas.

This was a black night. It was dark. Judas is now under the sway of Satan and his legions of demons.

So what do we learn from the tragic story of Judas the betrayer? Judas is perhaps the world's greatest example of lost opportunity and wasted privilege.

[31 : 57] look who he was with day and night for three years. The Messiah, the Son of Glory, the Creator God of the universe.

And he lost those opportunities and the waste of the privilege to be with the Lord. Judas is also a prominent illustration of the danger of the love of money.

He had a love for money. Love of money was more important to him than was eternal life. He was building a nest egg and that ointment was a year of salary.

He could live a long time on that. Judas is the supreme example of betrayal directed to God.

And I would suggest this is one reason we must continue to examine ourselves to make sure we're one with Christ. Look inward. Paul commands that.

[33 : 08] Examine yourselves. and that should be a process that we go through in our closet at home frequently. Judas is an example of the patience, the love, the mercy, and the kindness of Christ.

We won't get there in our study, but at the arrest of Jesus when he walked up, Jesus referred to him as friend.

Called him his friend. Judas proves that Satan is always at work among God's people.

I was a young believer when I came to grips with that. I was, well, Satan's down the street in that bar over there and Satan's over there young. He's at work among God's people. that's where the fields are waiting for his harvest.

Planting discord. Judas proves the deadliness of pride and the deadliness of hypocrisy.

[34 : 27] And he had plenty of both. We have to battle pride, don't we? We have to battle pride. We have to battle hypocrisy. Judas proves that there is nothing that sinful men can do to thwart the sovereign will of God.

God's in total control of all this. And Judas is a pawn. Out of this great tragedy came the triumph of redemption.

The cross of Christ, the blood of Jesus, Satan's apparent victory was his ultimate defeat. He is a defeated foe.

Maybe he hadn't figured that out yet, but he is a defeated foe. There was a poem written centuries ago. Don't worry, it's short.

still as of old, men by themselves are priced for thirty pieces, Judas sold himself, not Christ.

[35 : 48] He sold himself for the price of a slave. he is now a termine slave in the pier. he is now man a a man a man a a man!

man a man a a!