

24 Hours - Judas

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Bible Text: Luke 22:1-6,47-48

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Our first week we found ourselves in John chapter 13 in what we know as the Passover meal, the Last Supper - Jesus bending down with a towel and a basin of water and washing the feet of his apostles, the disciples.

Last week we migrated to a physical and geographical location that we are actually going to spend three weeks in. Last week in Matthew chapter 26 it was the famous prayer of Jesus that comes in three parts where he prayed, “Father, not my will, but yours be done. If there is anyway possible, let this cup pass from me.”

We continue this week in Luke chapter 22. We are still in the Garden of Gethsemane. If you will remember from last week Jesus brought the apostles minus Judas—whom we will speak of in just a moment. What we know as John chapter 17, that great high priestly prayer was prayed with them. Then he went a little ways further. It says that he left Peter, James and John and then he went and literally, according to the Word of God, he fell on his face and he prayed three times.

When we pick up the story today in Luke chapter 22 he has returned from the third prayer. He is speaking to the apostles about the fact that the time has come; he is about to be betrayed. And in Luke 22:47-48 we have a very simple understanding of who, what, when, where and how.

And while He [being Jesus] yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?¹

As I alluded to in your worship guide, the name that rings above all other names as far as names that you do not want to be called, do not want to be recognized as, or do not want to name your children, is the name Judas, in particular Judas Iscariot.

And this passage of Scripture says that he came with the multitude. We will speak, more specifically next week, that there were 500 men, military men, a militia with swords. He comes and he presents himself to Jesus and according to the Word of God he betrays him with a kiss. The other eleven were praying or sleeping in the Garden of Gethsemane. He is out with the multitude. He is out with the scribes and the Pharisees. He is out with those bearing swords and yet here in the garden, this same Luke 22, they are all together.

¹ Luke 22:47-48.

Now there are three specific things about this person of Judas the one who betrays the Lord, that I want to discuss. But the first one we have to discuss is this, the person of Judas. Who was this man that we know as Judas Iscariot? There are really two streams of thought that we need to come to an understanding of, because there has probably been no one person in the Bible more discussed as far as his motives, as far as his reasons for than this individual.

Here are your two options. Either, A) he was misled or B) he was a monster. Now let me share with you the evidence for both. If one says that Judas was a misled individual, maybe even a misinformed individual, you subscribe kind of a sympathetic tone to this character that with all that was taking place in Jesus' day. After all, the Romans were in charge of Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin, the Jewish establishment had gone awry. They had made everything contrary to what it was supposed to be. Politically they were in a bad place. Spiritually they were in a bad place. And here was Jesus who rode in on a donkey, 10,000 people flocking to him. Here was Jesus who overturned the tables not once, but twice, in his ministry and Judas from this perspective was misled because he said that ultimately Jesus is going to reign. Ultimately Jesus is going to rule. And it just appears that in over three and a half years of his ministry he has not taken advantage of any opportunity to do so, so therefore from this perspective Judas was going to play his hands, force him to take over, force him as we will see next week when Jesus says, "I could call down legions of angels," force him to bend the swords into ploughshares as Isaiah prophesied.

From this perspective Judas meant well, but he did it the wrong way. In this perspective Judas knew who Jesus was, knew what he ultimately would be and tried to rush things and get it out of order. It is a very sympathetic view. It is the idea that he just was misled.

But then there is the other perspective that Judas wasn't just misled, he wasn't just misinformed, but that down deep he truly was a monster. There was something deep down inside of him that was terribly awry and for a lack of a better term, incredibly disturbed.

Now to show the evidence from this perspective we actually have to go to the Word of God, various Scriptures that give us some insight into who Judas was and is. And chronologically speaking, the first time we have any commentary about Judas other than just being named among the twelve is in John chapter six. Jesus is early in his ministry and he is going by and he is preaching and he is communicating and in John 6:66 kind of interesting there, 6 6 6, it says that there were those who had been following Jesus who left, who decided it wasn't worth it, who decided they weren't going to stick around for the long haul. And in verse 70 of John 6 Jesus speaking to his apostles says, "I have called every one of you and one of you is a devil."

Now he didn't say one of you is misled. He didn't say one of you just means well, but you are just doing it about the wrong way. He didn't say, you know, one of you one day is going to make a really bad decision that you are going to just wish you never did. No,

he said, "One of you is a devil." That is a pretty stark accusation from Jesus Christ, God in flesh.

You continue on through the gospel of John chapter 17 in the Garden of Gethsemane, the high priestly prayer that we didn't specifically allude to but at the beginning of the Garden of Gethsemane experience. In the garden Jesus is praying to his Father in verse 12 of John 17. He says, "Father, everyone you have given me," speaking specifically of the apostles, "every one of them is saved except one." And he calls him the son of perdition. You say, "Well, what is so significant about that?"

In the book of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, though it is the apostle Paul, inspired by the same Holy Spirit, that whole chapter about who is the antichrist figure would be, that is the title that is given to the antichrist in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. So this guy is really not batting 1000, so to speak. He is called a devil and he is called by the same title that is given to the antichrist.

You go into the book of Acts chapter one. Jesus has risen from the dead. Whom we know as the apostles are gathered together in the upper room. The Bible says there are 120 gathered plus the women and they are praying and they decide with the Holy Spirit's instruction to call another. A man by the name of Matthias will be called to fill his place. And there the apostle Peter speaks about what all that Judas did and how he betrayed the Lord and how he hung himself and he fell and his guts were spilled out. And then at the very end of Acts 1:25 it says that Judas went to his own place. It doesn't say he went to hell. It doesn't say he went to the bottomless pit. It is almost as if the Bible says, "There is a special cell for this guy. He went to his own place."

Now he may have been misled, but that sounds pretty monstrous to me. And the question we have to ask ourselves is: How did he get there? Over three and a half years, even though Peter, James and John fell asleep in the garden and even though the other guys didn't stand up and most of them ran away, they didn't betray Jesus. They didn't gather a group of guys with swords. They didn't go this route. So what was so different about Judas than these guys?

And I think you need to back up a little bit in Luke chapter 22 to a passage that chronologically is before the Last Supper, but gives us insight to the kiss of Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Verse one of Luke 22.

Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And

he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.²

Before we dig into the specifics of what actually led to this betrayal, more evidence of the monstrosity of Judas: it said that Satan entered him.

Now Mary Magdalene was possessed with seven demons and the demoniac had who knows how many and in Mark chapter one there was a man in the synagogue who a demon came out and cried, but nowhere else in Scripture does it say Satan specifically entered them.

How did this man go from being called out three and a half years earlier, how did this man go from being one who was sent two by two? How did this man go who was being entrusted with the thing of the apostles to this monster of a character? And what I want to share with you this morning is this, that there were certain themes that were allowed in his life that if they present themselves into your life can lead you down the same path.

But before I share the Word, I have got to give you a story that took place in our family's life this last week. Now one thing you need to understand is this. My wife who is teaching a women's Bible study right now, my wife is an absolutely phenomenal cook. People ask me all the time. "What is your favorite restaurant?" Traci's kitchen. By far that is my favorite. I don't know what it is. And there are some great restaurants in our community, but I just... if she makes it, I love it. To my knowledge—we have been married almost sixteen years—there is only one thing that my wife has ever cooked that did not taste good. And you can ask her what it is. She attempted early in our marriage, she attempted to cook diet carrot slaw. I don't even think Paula Dean can make that taste good. I am just convinced. But nonetheless, everything and anything she cooks, it is absolutely fabulous.

Within the last week she cooked a massive Italian meal at our house. And I don't know how much is there, but she had the sauce cooking. You know, to make it right you have got to do it for hours, right, ladies? I mean, she is just making this sauce and it has got all kinds of ingredients, the tomatoes, two different kinds of meats, I mean, it is everything you would want in spaghetti sauce.

Thirty minutes before the meal was to commence there was this look of panic on her face. And that doesn't happen very often in the kitchen unless I have eaten what she told me not to eat because she was going to prepare it. And she says, "I need you to taste this." I said, "Ok, what is wrong?" She said, "You will know. Just taste it."

And when I put the spaghetti sauce in my mouth immediately it resonated with too much saltiness. It was too salty.

Now this is what is interesting about this illustration. If you were to take that amount of spaghetti sauce and I don't know how much was actually there, but let's just say a gallon

² Luke 22:1-6.

of it, would you testify with me that the salt as far as quantity was a small portion of that? It wasn't half salt and half tomatoes. But just a little too much or a little bit of salt can make all the difference in the world.

Do you realize that in Matthew 5:13 Jesus says that you and I as believers are the salt of the earth? You know, Jesus recognized that when it comes to quantity you would be in the minority. He said, "The road to destruction is broad, but the road to righteousness is narrow." Jesus recognized that. So when we go out in the world and we go to a school, we go to our place of business and we have these thoughts, am I the only one who believes this? But yet a little bit of salt can make all the difference in the world.

And with panic on her face she turned to me and she said, "Find out how to fix this problem."

Now I don't know how to cook, but I know how to Google. I went to the computer and I found out something that probably most of you know, but we did not, that if you will take a raw potato, put it in the sauce, it will take the salt out of the sauce. And in about thirty minutes it worked beautifully. I had to tell that story before I put this next segment on the screen.

What were the potatoes in Judas' life? What were the things that he allowed in his life that, "took the salt out," that made him less distinctive, that took away his difference? Why was he not with the other eleven? Why was he not in the garden praying or sleeping? Why was he out carousing with the world? What was it? And it was a slow fade. It didn't happen over night. It was a process in his life, but there are three specific things about the potatoes that we need to be careful of today. If we allow these in our life, they will cause us to be indistinctive. They will cause us to lose our saltiness and they will put us on a path that none of us ultimately wants to go.

And the first one simply this. It is the potato of populous opinion. Look in verse two of Luke 22.

"And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him [being Jesus]; for they feared the people."³

They were more concerned, Judas was more concerned, about the latest exit poll than on who Jesus actually was. They were more concerned that 500 men could do more than the eleven in the Garden of Gethsemane.

If we live our lives according to licking our finger, putting it up in the wind and seeing what the latest fad is, you are going to end up in a real bad place real quick.

Now it does not happen overnight. It is a slow fade. We listen to one report. We see one experience. And what happens is when we are the only person in a place of business who lives a life distinctive of Jesus Christ, when the only one in our school, the only one in

³ Luke 22:2.

our neighborhood, what ultimately happens is we see that we are outvoted. We see that we are outnumbered. And we began just to allow ourselves to go with the populous opinion.

In the gospel of John 9 one of the three times that Jesus heals a blind man, he heals a man, according to John 9 that was blind from his birth. The scribes and the Pharisees got really upset about this because he healed him on the Sabbath day. And so they came to his parents and what they wanted to know was: Was this young man truly blind from birth? Was this a shenanigan? Was this a circus act? What was really going on here?

All they had to say was, yes, he was blind from birth.

But what did they say? “He is of age; ask him.”⁴

And the Bible says they did that because they feared being put out of the synagogue. They feared not being in the inner circle. They feared not getting the promotion. They feared not being in the inner loop. They feared being defriended on Facebook. They feared that. And so they gave in to populous opinion.

Judas sided with the multitude. There may have been tens of thousands of people who marched Jesus in on what we know of as Palm Sunday, but there would be only five at the cross the next week.

But there was another thing, another potato in his life. Judas was in what I call profit taking. Look at verse five of this passage. “And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.”⁵

Thirty pieces of silver and if this is your first time being in a church service, your first time to study this character of Judas, you may not have heard what I am going to share with you, but for those of you who have studied this character for years, you know that this was not a large sum of money. In those days this was not massive. This was not like doubling your retirement account. This was not like getting an annual year’s salary. If you were to take the price of silver today and equate it then, in our economy, in our terminology we are talking about one thousand dollars.

Now don’t get me wrong. A thousand dollars is incredibly significant. A thousand dollars is that first baby step in financial peace, that emergency fund. A thousand dollars can get you out of a lot of trouble. A thousand dollars can go a long way, but is it really worth a thousand dollars to lose your soul and betray the Messiah? A thousand dollars.

And when you look at the story of Judas what you realize is he was into profit taking. Let me share with you what I mean.

⁴ John 9:21, 23.

⁵ Luke 22:5.

See, this wasn't a big money maker for him. He held the bag of money for the apostles. He had access to the funds. This same Jesus when he paid his taxes, when April 15th came up in Jerusalem, went and caught a fish and paid it. It wasn't that he had a lack of funds. It wasn't that he needed more. It was, listen very clearly, he thought that he deserved more for himself.

Now I want to address two things that are happening in our culture and in our society today. And I want, for lack of better terms, to put cold water on both of them. We are surrounded in our society with people that I call hyper tithers. Do you know what a hyper tither is? A hyper tither says if you pay 10 percent to the Lord nothing bad will happen to you. That is a hyper tither. And what they do is they say, "You need to pay your tithe." No, you don't. You need to give. You pay a bill. You give to the Lord. You pay taxes. You give to the Lord.

There is a big difference. But then on the other side of the equation, we run into people I call tither deniers. Tither deniers are these ones who say, "No, that is an Old Testament law. You don't need to do anything like that. Forget that. That is something... You know, Jesus didn't speak a lot about it, so you shouldn't either."

Yet Jesus didn't talk about homosexuality either, but I am not in favor of it.

That being said, I think both sides of the equation are erroneous because what they both fall into the trap of is it is about them. It is about either getting what I want when I want or about somehow having a lucky charm around my neck. And in the middle what we discover is Judas thought he needed just a little bit, that he thought he needed something for himself.

When we begin to look at our life and profit taking from the Word, in other words, if we rather than giving to God, whether it be a talent or money, it doesn't matter, and saying, "Oh, no, no, I am not going to give to you. I am going to keep this to myself," we come into the same trap that Judas did.

And, by the way, what did he do with the money when it was all said and done? He gave it back. He didn't really need it, but oh, did he want it. So there is the idea of populous opinion, the idea of profit taking.

But there is one more thing that Judas did here and it is in verse six. It says in the very last statement there was the absence of the multitude. Judas made this decision based on his own private interpretation.

When you have decisions to make in life and I am not talking about the difference between the double cheese burger and the pizza. I am talking about major decisions in life regarding family, children, occupation, finances, whatever it may be, one of the biggest, "Judas potato traps" that you can get into is thinking that your opinion is the right opinion and you do not seek what I call wise counsel.

Had he just taken James and John aside he would have done something different. And what I mean by that is James and John came to Jesus earlier and said, “Ok, Jesus, when you come and you reign, who gets to sit on the right and who gets to sit on the left, because we are really interested in those positions.” And Jesus said, “It is not for you to know, but for my Father in heaven.”

Nowhere in Scripture does Judas come to the eleven and say, “Hey, guys, I know we are fed up with the Romans. I know we are fed up with all these laws. I got this brilliant idea. Why don’t we trap Jesus into having to take over the world?” What do you think those guys would have said? Judas, you are barking up the wrong tree.

When David sought Bathsheba, the Bible says he was alone on the roof. How many times has the slow fade or how many bad decisions have been made because everybody else, even the Word of God said you should not be doing this. You said, “It doesn’t matter. This is what I want to do. It is what I desire. It suits me best.”

Do you notice how many personal pronouns are in there? It was a private interpretation. So populous opinion, profit taking, private interpretation. What those things will do, they are potatoes that when we put them in the sauce of our life, they take away our distinctiveness. They make us just like the world. And what ends up happening, just like in Judas’ case, is you end up making decisions just like the world would, which leads to my final point. The whole process of how it happened. How did it occur?

In Luke 22: 1-6, verse four it says:

“And [he] communed with the chief priest and the captains, how he might betray him unto them.”⁶

Verse five. “And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.”⁷

I am going to give you a little litmus test to let you know how you might be falling into the potato trap, how you might be falling into the trap that Judas did, because what I have learned in talking to people for years and years and years is whether it is populous opinion, whether it is private interpretation, whether it is profit taking, when it is your life you can’t see it. So how can we step back and say, “What is it, what was the process that led him to do these things?”

And there are three words in this passage of Scripture. The first one is this. He communed with them. That doesn’t mean he had a conversation. He didn’t send them, in our terminology, an email, an instant message or a text. What he did was he actually spent quality time communicating and discussing with these guys his plan. To commune takes it further than even a one meal. It gives us the idea of a repetitive, consistent time period.

⁶ Luke 22:4.

⁷ Luke 22:5.

If we would rather spend more time with the world's stuff than the Lord's stuff, you are communing with the world. That didn't get an amen. Okay. If you are spending more time desiring the world's stuff than the Lord's stuff that is called communing. In other words, your focus, your thoughts, your attention are on what the world can provide, not what the Lord can provide. That is the first thing he did. And then there is this second word in verse five. It says they were glad.

If you are living a life sold out for Jesus Christ, if you are living a life where you share your testimony among those that you have interpersonal relationships with, you let me give you some advice. You are not going to be the first person chosen on the dodge ball team. You are not going to be the first person chosen to organize the Christmas party for your corporation, because you won't allow things they would allow. You will be a bumner to the party.

In other words, if the world loves you, if the world sings your praises, if you are what the world craves to have and the world is glad with you, you might be in a bad situation.

But then there is this last word, covenanted with him. To make a covenant with somebody is more than to make a promise. If you want to say, "I will be there at a certain time doing a certain thing..."

When a person in Old Testament days and even Jesus' day, in biblical Judaistic days, when a person covenanted with somebody it was so unique that I don't even want to do it on stage in front of you. Two people who covenanted together went face to face, typically seated in chairs, would grab the other person by the hamstring and look into their eyes, eye to eye, nose to nose, and literally as close as you can get without being one person. He got to the point where there was no decisive, distinctive difference between him and them. And he had spent three and a half years with Jesus.

So how is it that a person who at whatever age comes to an understanding that they are a sinner, at whatever age realizes they have gone against the ways of God and literally or proverbially falls on their knees and says, "Jesus save me, Jesus forgive me," how do they get to the point where they are so saturated with the world, that they are so indoctrinated in the world, that they lose their saltiness and they ultimately betray the Lord?

It is the potatoes. You begin to see the world for what the world can offer. You begin to get from the world what it can give to you and you begin to think that the world has the answers rather than the Word.

Before our time of invitation I want to share with you a statement that was said to me about twenty years ago by a pastor. I was listening to him preach. And he made a statement that really bothered me at first. But as I let it soak into my life, I began to understand it. I want to share it with you today.

You know it is good preaching if I haven't forgotten it in twenty years. He said, "Every one of us," now listen. "Every one of us is one bad decision away from being on the path to becoming Adolph Hitler." Now I heard that the first time and said, "Hitler? I am no Hitler." And you may have said, "Judas? I am no Judas."

But one decision, one potato, so to speak, and it begins a slow fade. We are black and white, turned to grey. And the truth of God fades in the distance and we look up, weeks, months, years down the road and we always ask this question. How did I get here?

So as we prepare for our time of invitation, the question I would ask you is: What potato have you allowed in your life? What item have you allowed to get into the sauce of your life that is sucking the salt out, removing the distinctiveness?

When we prepared that spaghetti sauce do you know how it tasted good again? When we took the potatoes out.