

**"Judas Iscariot, which also was the betrayer"**  
LK 6:16

He was a handpicked disciple of Jesus Christ: a preacher of the gospel, a healer of the sick, a traveling companion of Jesus. He was so trusted he was made treasurer of the apostolic evangelistic team. He wasn't elected to the position - Jesus personally chose Judas for the job.

According to Augustine, tradition says "Jesus had delivered Judas often from death, and for his sake healed his father of palsy and cured his mother from leprosy, and next to Peter he honoured him above all the other Apostles."

But we do know certain things about Judas as a fact: that Jesus washed his feet, let him dip his bread in His own cup, and made him His treasurer. Yet this was the very man who would betray Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane - with a kiss of death!

Judas led the wild mob of Jewish officers to the garden, where he identified Christ with a kiss. After the kiss, Jesus looked into Judas' eyes and said, "**Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?**" (LK 22:48). He was saying, "Is that how you would betray me, Judas - with a kiss, a sign of affection?"

I wonder what went through Judas' mind as the scene unfolded: The mob fell backward at the very mention of Jesus' name. Then suddenly they all rose up in demonic anger, waving swords and clubs - and they bound Christ and dragged Him to the house of Anna. Early church writers described the scene this way:

"Some of them lay hold on his garments, others on the hair of his head: some pluck him by the beard, others struck him with angry

# The Truth About Jesus - Betrayer Of Christ

fists, and being enraged, that with a word he had thrown them backwards on the ground, they therefore threw him on his back, and basely tread him under their dirty feet... As a roaring lion drags along his prey, and tears it, and pulls it, so they hauled Christ all along the earth, spitting, pounding on him, pulling him by the hair..."

This is confirmed by the Scriptures:

**"Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion"**  
PSA 22:12-13

Judas' betrayal of Jesus was so heinous, so diabolical, that one early church father said: "It would have been well for the world, especially for the children of God, that Judas was alone in this transgression, that there were no more traitorous persons in it besides himself." In other words: "It would have been good if there had been only one Judas."

**But the truth is, the world is full of Judas' kind! The church still witnesses the betrayal of Jesus Christ every day.** The spirit of Judas is very much alive in the hearts of many former followers of Christ - and within the walls of the church as well!

I want to ask you a blunt, up-front question: Could you be a traitor to Christ and not know it? Have you sold out Jesus and betrayed Him? Traitors are these who once were loyal to the one they betray. Only those within the camp can be traitors.

There are two facts I want to share with you about Judas. They may surprise you - but please do not take them lightly. I believe they were given to me by the Holy Spirit as a warning for your soul!

## **Fact Number One: The High Priests and Religious Leaders Did Not Need Judas to Seize Christ**

Jesus could easily have been captured without Judas' help. He had taught in the synagogues, streets and marketplaces. His face was one of the most recognizable in all Israel and Judah. Scripture says the people followed Him even to the quiet places where He withdrew to pray!

Jesus said to the arresting mob, "**Are you come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me"** (MATT 26:55). In other words: "I am well known to you - My face is familiar. Why this sudden attacks

though I were a complete stranger to you?"

Clearly Judas' kiss was not needed to identify Christ - because Christ's enemies knew Him well already! His face was emblazoned in their consciences. And the aura of His mighty presence was itself enough to identify Him.

Indeed, it is clear the perpetrators of this crime did not need Judas. The fact is, they despised him. They treated him lightly, using him and then quickly pushing him aside. When he repented suddenly of his traitorous deed, flinging the money to the ground and crying, **"I have betrayed the innocent blood"** (MATT 27:4), the Jewish leaders merely laughed at him. They said, **"What is that to us? See thou to that"** (verse 4), meaning, "That's your problem - take care of it yourself. We have no need of you or your tears!"

Judas wasn't needed to Jesus' trial or crucifixion, either. In fact, he wasn't around for either one. By the time Christ went to the Cross, Judas was already dead, having committed suicide within twentyfour hours of his awful deed.

### **Fact Number Two: Satan Needed a Judas!**

Satan was behind the scenes, directing every treacherous move. His strategy was to find a betrayer - someone close to Christ, someone He trusted, one who supposedly was under His care. Yet he had to have one whose heart was tilted to covetousness - someone he could entice and weaken, planting questions and doubts in his mind. Then he could possess him and turn him into a traitor!

You see, Satan wanted much more than to have his demon-directed mob go into the garden and take hold of Jesus. He wanted the whole affair to make a statement - to be a satanic witness! He wanted a demonic testimony to ring loudly in every realm of creation.

And here is the statement he wanted to make:

**"Jesus Christ cannot keep you - He can't even deliver His own!** He is not a true Saviour or a Keeper of men's souls. He failed to keep Judas - and He failed to keep me, one of His angels, and all the others who fell with me. I'm going

to prove that Jesus has no power to keep anyone from falling. He will give you up to your enemy!"

**Judas was to be the devil's illustrated sermon on how Jesus Christ was powerless to save the lost - because He did not save His very own disciple!**

Satan wanted to appear as if he had snatched Judas right out of the Master's hand. He wanted to show he had the power to approach anyone close to Jesus and take him at will - and that Jesus would let it happen! He could march right into the Lord's flock as a roaring lion, steal a lamb in his teeth, and damn and destroy him, causing him to commit suicide.

Finally, when the time would come to push Judas to kill himself, Satan would scream out his testimony to all of hell, heaven and the world: "Do you see what has become of this man? Look at him - he was a disciple of Jesus. But Jesus couldn't keep him!"

Satan had to have a Judas! He wanted to use him to proclaim his demonic statement to three different realms:

**1. Satan first wanted to make a statement to all principalities and powers of darkness:** I believe the devil planned to use Judas' fall to justify his own fall - and the fall of those angels who joined in his rebellion!

If the devil could destroy a close disciple of Jesus - one who himself had cast out devils, healed the sick, performed miracles and walked in the fullest light of truth - then he could say to every fallen angel and demonic power: "See? God's love is flawed. His compassions do fail! It was prophesied long ago that Judas would come, and yet God did nothing to protect or save him. God could have kept me too - He could have kept all of us from pride. But now you can clearly see that God again has failed to keep His own!"

**2. Satan also wanted to make a statement to all the holy angels.** He sought to throw darts of doubts into heaven itself - to corrupt the unfallen, uncorrupted witnesses in glory.

Don't think for a moment the devil has given up his struggle to bring

down the heavens and exalt himself as God. He is the accuser of not just the brethren, but of all that is of God - including the angels!

After Judas' suicide, Satan screamed to those in glory: "God couldn't save one of His very own disciples - and He didn't keep us, His created angels. What makes you think He'll keep you? He created man, and now it is clear He can't keep man. His own kind betray Him! So what hinders another rebellion among you?"

We know the battle still rages, that Satan still fights the heavenly hosts. He fought the archangel Michael, who sought to bring the Word of God to Daniel. And surely today he uses every lie and diabolic strategy to try to plant doubt and rebellion in the hosts of Jehovah!

**3. Most of all, Satan's statement was meant for mankind - for you and me!** The message he sent was meant primarily for God's people on earth. He wants to use it to destroy all faith!

The devil knows the Scriptures well - and he knew that all following generations would look back upon first occurrences as examples **"upon whom the ends of the world are to come"** (1.COR 10:11). Satan wanted an example too - a pattern to show every following generation what he claimed was God's failure to keep His own children from falling. The betrayal by Judas was meant to shake and undermine the faith of God's children in His saving, keeping power.

So what, the devil says, if Jesus exposed Judas as a "devil": **"Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"** (JN 6:70). Satan replies, "That's all the more testimony to my power! If Jesus knew Judas had the devil in him, then why didn't he overpower me? Why did He let Judas continue as a devil? Why didn't He cast out me? If God couldn't take care of His own disciples, how can He take care of you?"

Beloved, the enemy wants to plant a seed of doubt in the minds of all men and women - and he will repeat his message time after time, as long as the Lord has a church on the earth. He will cry out from generation to generation, right up

### to eternity: God cannot keep His children!"

Imagine what the high priests and the Sanhedrin must have thought as they bargained with Judas, the pitiful man before them. They saw this devilish example betraying Christ and falling into ruin. They must have said to themselves, "We're right! Jesus is not God, or the Son of God. If He were, He would have kept this disciple from falling."

You can see them opening their scrolls, quoting:

*"It is written by the Psalmist, 'Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper... The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil'* PSA 121:4-7

If Jesus were God, He would have fulfilled this Scripture!

*"Also it is written: 'Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler... There shall no evil befall thee neither shall any plague come nigh to thy dwelling'* PSA 91:3,10

Jesus cannot be God, because He allowed Judas to be snared. Evil befell this man - and he was a close disciple!"

You can hear satan shouting to their inner man: "If Jesus is God, why isn't He keeping this man? Why isn't Judas being delivered?"

A few weeks ago, during our Friday prayer meeting, we heard the testimony of a mother and her teenage daughter who had been attacked by a mob of youth. The mob ripped the girl's clothes and beat her mother. Somehow, they escaped without further harm.

When they came forward to testify, the mother was wearing sunglasses to hide her eyes, blackened from the beating. Now the daughter is struggling with her faith. She said to me tearfully, "Look at my lip - a girl bit me there, and I have the scar for life. Pastor David, my mother has served the Lord for so long. Why did God allow this to happen to us? Why didn't His promises work? Where was He?"

A couple of months ago, fires and looting spread through Los Angeles. But for the first few days of those riots, all the Teen Chal-

lenge centers in that area were spared, including a huge warehouse which is used to store clothes and appliances, which are sold at base prices to help the poor and needy.

Then, on the third or fourth day of the riots, the warehouse was burned to the ground. Some 5,000 square feet of goods and space were completely destroyed. Nothing was left!

Some of the young Teen Challenge converts questioned: "Where was the angel of the Lord? Where was the protection? This was a good work in God's name. Why did He allow it to be destroyed?"

### **In These Troubled Times, When All Is Being Shaken, Satan Will Try to Place Great Fear upon You!**

More and more, you are going to hear about God's people going through trials and suffering all kinds of evil. And satan will use those examples to try to convince you that God will not be there when you need Him - that He will not keep you from the wicked one!

We have been given great examples of faith under trial: According to church tradition, the apostle Paul was beheaded. Hebrews 11 lists the heroes of the faith who were burned at the stake, skinned alive, boiled in oil - all because they wouldn't recant their testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet my message here is not meant to deal with why God's people suffer - why some are permitted to endure so much when His promises are so mighty. I don't know all the answers to that. But I do know that Paul said this: *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"* (ROM 8:18).

Nothing can compare to the glory we look forward to! "If so be that we suffer with him [Christ], that we may be also glorified together" (vs 17).

I know also that God uses suffering to prepare us. We are going to go through economic suffering, sickness and other trials. I don't know why my wife, Gwen, has had cancer so many different times, or why my daughters Bonnie and Debbie have had cancer. I don't understand that kind of suffering.

But I do know this: If you aren't being prepared through trials, you will listen to the devil when he whispers to you, "God is not a Keeper of His people" - and you'll look for an easy ride to heaven! You'll run to some prosperity church to have your ears tickled. Then, when the first problem arises, you'll end up throwing away all your faith - because it hasn't answered your deepest problems and needs!

What was behind Judas' fall? How did this disciple become a traitor? This is important to know - because it gives us warning signs for our own lives, lest we stumble and fall too:

### **1. The Love of Money Had Taken Root in Judas' Heart!**

*"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"*

LK 22:4-5

The word "covenanted" here means "bargained." As Judas sat before these evil priests, he wouldn't settle for just fifteen or twenty pieces of silver - he had to have thirty or nothing. That was his bottom price!

Bible commentators make all kinds of excuses for Judas' betrayal. Many say that money was not his motive - that he only wanted to force Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom.

But the Truth is, money was the motive! Why else would he bargain, arguing a price? He could have simply said, "Look, I only want Jesus forced into this position to make Him display His power" - and he would have taken any amount of silver. **But the love of money had driven out of Judas' heart all the love he had for Jesus!**

Indeed, the love of money is the root of all such evil (see 1.TIM 6:10). It is the seed the devil plants in a man or woman's heart that drives out all love for Christ. Up sprouts the need to accumulate money. Then comes the need to count it and make sure it isn't lost. Afterward comes the need to build on it.

You may have set some goal for yourself - of retiring, or of being

financially secure. I'm sure Judas had a financial goal too. But this kind never have enough - because the goal is always being lifted higher!

The devil tells you, "If you want to serve the Lord, wait till you get a certain amount in the bank. Then you'll be free to serve Him!" But after you get that much, Satan whispers: "That's really not enough, because interest rates are going down. You really need this much more...." And the figure keeps escalating!

Yet the Bible says:

*"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred [turned away] from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things"*  
1.TIM 6:9-11

If your life is focused on making a living - on the pursuit of money - then you have the very same spirit of satan in you that Judas had in him! It was simple greed that turned Judas into a thief, a traitor and a murderer of Jesus Christ. And that proves Paul's argument that the love of money is the root and germ of all kinds of evil!

As you read this message, ask yourself: Have you sold out Christ in this way? Have you become a traitor to Him, bargaining your soul for more money?

There is nothing wrong with having a savings account. But if you have neglected Jesus because your life is wrapped up in accumulating money, then you too have sold out Jesus, as surely as Judas did!

## **2. Judas Became Blind to the Changes Overpowering Him!**

Satan had dropped a veil over Judas' eyes, so he could not see how he had been changing. The disciple became blind to the evil and ruin that had settled into his heart.

Judas was familiar with the prophecies about the one coming who would betray the Redeemer. I wonder how many times he read or heard these words: *"Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted,*

*which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me"* (PSA 41:9)

But never once did Judas think of himself as filling that awful role! "Me, the object of prophecy? Jeremiah and Isaiah saw my day? I'm not a betrayer of Christ - I am a simple disciple. I am not evil!"

Yet Jesus very clearly pointed a finger at the disciples and said, *"But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me... one of you shall betray me"* (JN 13:18,21). Was Judas so blind he could not see he was the man?

Today, we too read biblical prophecies that speak of our day. For example, Jesus said that in the last days many will again crucify Christ, putting Him to open shame, because they let their hearts grow cold: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (MATT 24:12).

That prophecy was spoken hundreds of years ago. Yet I ask you: Is your heart cold toward the Lord today? Jesus said sin would abound everywhere - **and the love of many believers would grow cold!** Are you the man or woman whom this prophecy is putting its finger on right now?

Let me share with you the most shameful thing that can happen to those who once knew and loved Jesus: Without knowing it, they become the devil's last day "Judas statement!" If your love is growing cold, the devil will use you as his example - the same way he used Judas!

Satan will point you out to all the powers of hell, all the angels in glory and all who knew you on earth - and he'll say: "Look! He once walked with Jesus - and Jesus didn't keep him! Once again, I slipped into the Lord's flock and stole another lamb so close to Christ. I have his heart now, and I will ruin and destroy him. He proves by his falling away that God is not a Keeper!"

Nothing could be worse for you than to stand before the Lord and answer for all your friends and acquaintances, because you turned away from Him. You may say, "Don't put that burden on me - I'm only responsible for my own

actions. I don't have to answer for anybody else!"

Not so! How many on your job once knew you as a lover of Jesus? You testified to them, you told them what Jesus did for you. They knew your walk with Christ. But you turned your back on Him. And you've changed - yet you don't know you've changed, because the devil has blinded you! Day by day, week by week, year by year, you've become hardened in your heart.

Now all who once knew you as a lover of Jesus see a different person. And a crowd of witnesses will arise on Judgment Day and condemn you to the Judge: "You can't judge me, God, because I was looking at his life! Ten years ago he was on fire and loved You with all his heart. I was deep in sin - and yet I had my eye on him. I saw how close he was to You. Then he failed - and I thought, 'What chance do I have?' Let my blood be upon him, Lord! What little hope I had of turning to You was taken from me by his failure to follow on!" That is how you become the Judas testimony!

## **Jesus Had the Last Word About His Keeping Power!**

In His final prayer with His disciples, Jesus made His own statement - to heaven, hell and all mankind:

*"Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition (Judas) ; that the Scriptures might be fulfilled"*

JN 17:12

Do you hear the truth of what Jesus is saying? "I lost only one - and I didn't really lose him, because he was of the devil from the beginning. I have kept everyone who has ever given Me his heart!"

I believe Judas could have been saved - because Jesus did everything He could for him. It wasn't God who hardened Judas' heart. He merely foresaw that Judas would harden himself to Christ, time after time. You see, Judas had a divided heart - and he chose not to repent! That is how he ended up as Satan's tool.

**Hear the words well, dear saint:** *"Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost!"* (JN 17:12).

The example of Peter should encourage us. Jesus told him, "Peter, satan is after you. He has desired to sift you, destroy you and turn you also into a traitor. But I'm praying for you, that your faith will not fail!"

**Peter didn't fail in his faith - because Jesus kept him!** Though he failed at the hour of temptation, he still had a heart that loved Christ - and Peter came back to Jesus, giving Him his heart and fully repenting. Jesus saw that hungry

heart and said, "I'm going to keep you from the power of the devil!"

Beloved, God is going to keep you - for "*greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*" (1.JN 4:4). You can turn to Psalm 91 and believe every verse about His protection over you. You may go through a season of suffering, but nobody can touch your peace with God!

We can't know what tomorrow holds - but I pray that as believers we can each say with Job, "*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*" (JOB 13:15). And I know for sure if

the Lord does let His wall of protection down, it's for a reason. We may never understand it all. But we can know this: "*He that keepeth thee will not sleep*" (PSA 121:3).

**It is true and it is sure:** *He "is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy"* JUD 24

**Hallelujah!**

David Wilkerson

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