

Remnant Life Church
January 13, 2021
The Disciples of Jesus – Judas

Madam Tussaud's Wax Museum, London – since 1970 visitors have been asked to name the most hated people

- Hitler; bin Laden; Idi Amin; Joseph Mengela; Joseph Stalin
- Today names like Justin Beiber, the Kardashians (take your pick of any of them) are being submitted
- But, surprisingly, the name Judas Iscariot has never made the list
- The name has been melded into the language of the culture carrying that same feeling of hated
 - A plant that grows in dry, arid regions that is very beautiful to look at but has a bitter taste is called a Judas tree
 - An animal used to lead other animals to the slaughter is known as the Judas Goat
- His name is synonymous with betrayal
 - So much so that Webster's dictionary identifies it as *someone who betrays someone else; a traitor as a Judas*
- Biblical baby names are often used –
 - David, Adam, Joshua, Seth, and Aaron
 - I have nephews named Michael, Andrew, and Asher,...but none are ever named Judas!

But there was much more to this man than the one single event that he is known and remembered for –

Virtually nothing is known of his life before Jesus

- Biblical scholars believe he was from Care-ee-oth – a small town south of Hebron
 - This made Judas the only non-Galilean of the 12
 - Judas was a Judean (Josh 15:25)
- His name does appear in three lists of the twelve found in Matt 10; Mark 3; and Luke 6
 - ...but it is always listed last

What can we come to know about a man whose name has gone down in infamy?

- He was the son of Simon or Simon Iscariot (John 6:71)
- He is always referred to by this name to distinguish him from the other disciple named Judas who also happened to be the half-brother of Jesus
 - He, incidentally, decided to go by the name Jude when he wrote his book that sits near the end of the NT

If Judas contributed anything to the ministry of Jesus nobody said so

- There is nothing recorded that indicates he had the right heart
- John writes that he was a thief who was in charge of the money (John 12:6)
 - But note this was written after the betrayal and Judas' death
- Judas certainly had a head for money

- It was he who complained about the waste of expensive perfume when Mary anointed Jesus' feet in John 12:25
- Many believe it was money alone that drove Judas to do what he did
 - In Exodus 21:32 we read that the price of a slave was 30 pieces of silver
 - The same sum the Pharisees paid Judas to betray Jesus
- But when Judas learned that Jesus was to be crucified, we read in Mathew 27 that he went back to the temple and tried to give the money back to the ones he had made the deal with
- And in his great grief and remorse, he hanged himself (Matt 27:5)

But it is in the understanding of how Judas responded that I want us to take a few minutes to examine this evening

- To betray someone means to give them up or deliver them to another for the purpose of care
- It may be for a treacherous reason it may not – of course most are

There is not doubt that Judas' intentions were not in the best interest of those around him

- But they did not know that
- In Matt 26:21 when Jesus told that one of them was going to betray Him what did the disciples say?
 - It wasn't nudging each other and saying, "is it Judas?" "that must be Judas" "I'll bet its Judas!"
 - They said, "is it me?"
- There are even schools of thought that suggest He was one of the closest to Jesus
 - He was sitting near Jesus at the last supper because Jesus dipped the bread and handed it directly to him
 - The seat at the head was the one of honor, where Jesus say
 - The closer you were to him was often an indication of your relationship
- The last thing you must remember is that Judas was selected by Jesus, just like Peter, James, and John
 - He was not a stranger who somehow worked his way into the upper room intent on making trouble
 - He was with Jesus and the others for 3 years

It is this type of information that has brought me to the place of thinking differently about Judas

- He had access to the money so it seems less likely that was the sole reason for his actions
- Remember, he, like the other 11, did not fully grasp the ministry of Jesus while they were with Him
 - They all got upset whenever Jesus began to talk about his impending death, the necessary sacrifice for sins
 - John 16:17-18 they said, "What does He mean by saying in a little while you will see me no more?"
 - In Matt 16:21 Peter takes Jesus aside and rebukes or scolds Him for saying He would soon die

- Matt 17:22 it says that the disciples were filled with grief because of His words
- Judas would never get it
- And for the other 11 it would only be after the resurrection
 - By that time, Judas was dead

I honestly don't think it had anything to do with money

I believe that Judas felt he was doing a good thing, what needed to be done

- I believe his thinking was, all I need to do is give thing a little push in the right direction and it will all come to pass
- And he was not the only one that felt that Jesus had come to get rid of the Romans and establish the nation of Israel again
- Jesus taught them more than once that it was not a battle of the flesh but one of the spirit.

Yes, he tried to return the money, and failing at that, he took His life

What should He have done?

- First, confessed His sin to the Father
- Then, perhaps try and explain his intent to the others

Instead, Judas missed out on so much...

- Certainly first, he missed out on the forgiveness of Jesus
 - Peter denied Jesus three times publicly
 - But Jesus forgave him and reinstated him as leader of the disciples
- He missed out on the peace of Jesus even in the darkest of times
 - He had heard the words spoken by Jesus and recorded in John 14:27 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*
 - But his heart was so troubled that he took his life
- He missed out on the power of God
 - Jesus rose from the dead
 - Judas would have seen that his actions did not destroy his master, his rabbi

Judas missed out on so much with his decision to take his own life

- Forgiveness, peace, the power of God
- All of that is available to you right now, today!

God forgives

God is the supplier and provider of a peace that passes all understanding

And He is the God of the universe with unfathomable power to alter the course of any situation

I believe Judas is a misunderstood man with misunderstood intentions

- He was a man that loved Jesus

- But there were flaws in his life that he never surrendered and it gave satan an point of entry into his mind and heart