



Judas – The Materialist

Adapted from “12 Disciples” series by Dennis Marquardt.

How many people named “Judas” do you know? More than likely, not one. The name Judas is held with such contempt that no one in their right mind would name their child “Judas,” unless of course they are not familiar with the Bible. People do not even use this name for their pet dog or cat because of the negative connotation to the name as a traitor. You are not likely to find “Judas” suggested in a book of baby names.

Probably the greatest personal tragedy in history is the story of Judas. How does a man go from being one of twelve chosen disciples, who could have had his name inscribed on the foundation stones of heaven, to being a man Jesus described as the “son of perdition” (the word “perdition” in Greek literally means “waste”)? How can a man fall from such a height to such a low

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place? Something edged him toward this great loss. The shock of this story is that it may have been something as simple as materialism that was at the foundation of his tragic fall.

There really is a street named "Easy Street." It is found in Honolulu, Hawaii, off the Pali Highway. A problem arises when you drive down "Easy Street," because you eventually comes to a dead end. Hmm. The literal "Easy Street" is a dead-end street. The same is true in life, too.¹

Judas is one of the most tragic stories in the Bible. How did it happen? Believe it or not, it all started and ended with a love for money. It is not money that corrupts; it is the **love of** money. Judas kept his eye on money and totally missed the Savior. What are you looking for? In what do you place your hope for happiness? It's so much better to find Jesus than to acquire all the wealth in the world!

¹ Christy Povolish, "Easy Street," April 15, 2008, <https://christypovolish.wordpress.com/tag/honolulu/> (accessed July 21, 2017).

“COURAGE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 12:1–8 (ESV) Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

John 13:21–30 (ESV) After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say

to you, one of you will betray me.” The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus’ side, so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, “Lord, who is it?” Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

Matthew 27:1–10 (ESV) When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor. Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and

brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.” So they took counsel and bought with them the potter’s field as a burial place for strangers. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directed me.”

C1: Judas, one of the 12 disciples, could have advanced the kingdom of God. Why do you think he walked away from that destiny?

C2: Have you ever walked away from God and focused more on something else? If yes, what did you focus on and why?

C3: Judas fit into the family of the 12 disciples so well that when Jesus spoke of His betrayer, no one thought of Judas. He was acting like them but lacked the internal change of heart that only God can see. Are you talking the talk but not walking the walk?

C4: What does “walking the walk” look like to you?

C5: In the Matthew 27:1-10 passage, we notice how terribly **the guilt and shame of sin** eats away at Judas. Have you ever had remorse for something you did? If so, what was it and have you repented and asked Christ for forgiveness?

If you have never done so, you can invite Jesus to be Lord of your life **RIGHT NOW!**

If you are studying this lesson in a group, take a moment right now to ask the others if anyone wants to have the peace of knowing Jesus as their Savior. If anyone says “yes,” lead them in a prayer of confession, repentance, and acceptance of Christ as Lord.

Now, celebrate together!

C6: One of the saddest verses in the Bible is found in John 13:27 “... and Satan entered into him.” What steps can you take and what steps can you share with other men to protect yourself?

C7: Jesus says that we cannot have two masters. We will “*love the one and hate the other.*” Is there anything that you love more than Jesus? Write these things down, along with your plan for turning more of your attention to Jesus.

C8: One thing that led Judas down the wrong path was materialism. Have you ever cared for a material thing more than something eternal? If so, how do you want to change your path so as to not end up like Judas?

Exercise #2: For the next 30 days, write out a strategic, practical, and spiritual plan to rid those things from your life so you can put Jesus #1 in your life. Be as specific as possible.

“STRENGTH” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 12:1–8 (ESV)

John 13:21–30 (ESV)

Matthew 27:1–10 (ESV)

S1: Judas walked with the apostles for three years, yet he still betrayed Jesus. Looking deep within yourself, can you find *a little Judas* there? You are walking with Jesus but not fully surrendered? Describe it.

S2: Jesus refers to Judas as the “son of perdition,” meaning “son of waste.” Why do you feel that Jesus used that term with Judas? How can you make sure you will never be a “son of waste?”

S3: Judas lost sight of Jesus and turned his eyes toward money, a material thing. Upon examination of your life, are there things which have steered your attention away from Jesus? If so, what are they and how can you put your eyes more firmly on Jesus?

S4: One of the saddest verses in the Bible is found in John 13:27 “... and Satan entered into him.” What does this mean, or say, to you?

S5: Judas places a love of money over his relationship with Christ. He even acts like he is living for Christ, performing miracles, walking with the other twelve to the point that they had no idea who would betray Christ. Over the next sixty days, spend time journaling on areas of your life where you need to put Christ first. What do you glean from your thoughts?

“ENDURANCE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 12:1–8 (ESV)

John 13:21–30 (ESV)

Matthew 27:1–10 (ESV)

E1: When Mary anoints Jesus, Judas became more concerned with the monetary cost than the spiritual action. How do you share with men that following Christ is more about the action than the cost? Be specific.

E2: Judas acted the part of a disciple. In what ways do we act the part of following Jesus without allowing Him and the Holy Spirit to change our hearts?

E3: What is the difference between sorrow and repentance?

E4: Why do you feel that Judas was *sorrowful* but not *repentant*?

E5: Have you ever been *sorrowful* for your actions and still needed to seek *repentance*?

What is keeping you from repentance?

Remember, you can repent and invite Jesus to be Lord of your life **RIGHT NOW!**

If you are studying this lesson in a group, take a moment right now to ask the others if anyone wants to have the peace of knowing Jesus as their Savior. If anyone says “yes,” lead them in a prayer of confession, repentance, and acceptance of Christ as Lord.

Now, celebrate together!

E6: What are your thoughts about John 13:27?

E7: What would you share with other men about Judas?

Exercise #2: In your prayer time for the next 30 days, ask the Holy Spirit to show you places in your life where you can strengthen your walk with Christ. Write out an action plan where the Holy Spirit can lead you to steps of improvement in your discipleship journey.