



# The Life of Jesus (117)

## Judas' Betrayal

Matthew 26:46-56

## #1 Judas' Betrayal

After finishing His prayer, Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to be arrested and handed over for crucifixion.

“Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!” (Mt 26:46-47)

While Jesus was still speaking, Judas Iscariot came with a large crowd armed with swords sent from chief priests.

When Judas saw Jesus on the mountain, he kissed Him, saying, “Greetings, Rabbi!” (Mt 26:49)



Then the armed people seized and arrested Jesus. Now, Jesus was arrested and all the disciples deserted Him and fled. That's what happened on Thursday night—the day before Jesus was crucified.

## #2 Judas' Betrayal

Judas became an icon of betrayal by betraying Jesus and selling Him out for 30 pieces of silver.

Judas was one of the 12 disciples who were very close to Jesus. But Judas ended up betraying Jesus.

We can't be absolutely certain why Judas betrayed Jesus, but there are some things we can infer about him from Scripture.

### 1) Lack of Faith

Even though Judas was one of the 12 disciples chosen by Jesus, it seems that he never truly believed Jesus to be the Son of God.

While other disciples called Jesus "Lord," Judas never used this title for Jesus and instead called Him "Rabbi," which just means teacher.

## #3 Judas' Betrayal

### 2) Different Purpose

At a crucial moment, Judas realized that Jesus' actual mission was not what he was following Him for.

Judas believed the Messiah was going to overthrow Roman occupation and restore the physical kingdom of Israel with his power, authority, and wisdom.

But as Jesus drew nearer to Jerusalem, He began to say things that contradicted Judas' expectation. He said that He would suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and after three days rise again.

What Jesus did after entering Jerusalem may have also disappointed Judas. Rather than rallying people and taking some kind of political and military action for Israel's independence, Jesus only taught people in the temple.

## #4 Judas' Betrayal

### 3) Love of Money

Then something happened that changed Judas' mind.

When Jesus was in Bethany, “Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair.” (Jn 12:3)

Seeing this, Judas rebuked her, saying, “Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.” (Jn 12:5)

Judas didn't say this because he really cared about the poor. It was the money itself that made him angry.

“He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because **he was a thief**; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.” (Jn 12:6)

## #5 Judas' Betrayal

Seeing this, Jesus told Judas, "Leave her alone. It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial." (Jn 12:8-9)

Jesus clarified that what Mary did to Him was actually for His burial, meaning that the hour of His death was near, which went against Judas' reason for following Him.

So right after this, Judas decided to betray Jesus and sell Him to the chief priests.

"Then one of the Twelve - the one called Judas Iscariot - went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over." (Mt 26:14-16)

## #6 Judas' Betrayal

Seeing this, Jesus told Judas, "Leave her alone. It was These are the reasons Judas betrayed Jesus. Judas did not have true faith that Jesus was the Son of God. The reason Judas followed Jesus was not the purpose for which Jesus came to earth. Lastly, Judas loved money.

And Satan slipped through this crack in Judas' heart and led him to betray Jesus.

"Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus." (Lk 22:3-4)

Some people think that it wasn't actually Judas who made the choice to betray Jesus. We may think he was born to fulfill that cursed role and that he didn't have free will.

But that's not true. Judas' betrayal was the result of a mixture of his unbelief, selfishness, love of money, and Satan's attack and temptation.

## #7 Judas' Betrayal

However, it's also true that Judas' betrayal was prophesied in the Bible.

Psalm 41:9 says, “Even my close friend, someone I trusted, **one who shared my bread, has turned against me**” (Ps 41:9)

This prophecy was fulfilled during the Last Supper. During the meal, Jesus was deeply troubled and told His disciples, “This is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned against me.’” (Jn 13:18-19)

These verses indicate that Judas' betrayal had been known to God even before it actually happened. However, it doesn't necessarily mean that God manipulated Judas' heart to make it happen.

It simply means God knows not only what has happened in the past and what is happening in the present, but also everything that will happen in the future.



## #8 Judas' Betrayal

The fact that God sees and knows everything that will happen in the future does not actually violate our free will.

Even though Judas' betrayal was prophesied long before it took place, it was still Judas' choice. He had the full capacity to make his own choice out of his free will.

This becomes clear when we consider the fact that **Jesus did His best to turn Judas' heart to Him**. Even though He knew what Judas would do to Him, He still loved him to the end. He still washed his feet. By implying that He knew what Judas would do, Jesus gave him the opportunity to choose not to betray Him.

## #9 Judas' Betrayal

Judas' biggest mistake wasn't betraying Jesus. His betrayal was not the decisive factor in Jesus' death. The crucifixion would have happened anyway regardless of Judas' betrayal.

Judas' biggest mistake wasn't handing Jesus over to the chief priests but what he did afterwards.

“When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. “I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.”

“What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.” So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.” (Mt 27:3-5)

Judas regretted his wrongdoing shortly after Jesus was arrested. He even returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests. Then he killed himself because of his guilt. That was the greatest wrong Judas ever committed.

## #10 Judas' Betrayal

If Judas had deeply regretted his betrayal, repented, and later returned to Jesus after He was resurrected, Jesus would still love him, call him His friend, and accept him as His beloved disciple.

But Judas was so consumed with guilt and Satan's deceit that he decided to kill himself.

We can also make bad decisions. We can betray Jesus even now when we don't try to build up our faith in Him and choose to continue to dwell in our selfishness and love of the world.

However, we shouldn't be afraid of the wrong decisions we've made in the past and will make in the future. It's not over until God says it's over.

Jesus will still call us His friend, hoping that we return to Him. And God will welcome us, embracing us with open arms when we repent of our sins and decide to follow His will again. That's the love and grace of God we should always hold on to as Christians.