

Betrayed!

“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. They were delighted and agreed to give him money. He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.”
Luke 22:3-6 NIV

As we review the characters of the twelve Apostles we wonder why Jesus included Judas Iscariot among them.

It seems likely that Judas was the only apostle from the southern end of the nation near Jerusalem. His accent would not be similar to the Apostles from the northern area of Galilee. Perhaps Judas felt he was not truly accepted by the others.

Did Judas feel slighted by the eleven? Certainly he was honoured by Jesus because he had control of the money contributed to the mission. When the Twelve went out on preaching and healing missions his ministry was blessed the same as the others.

There was no evidence to point a finger at him when Jesus said that one of them was a traitor. Each Apostle said, “Is it I Lord?” (Matthew 26:22)

With every advantage given him, Judas still chose to betray

his benefactor. This was a very bitter experience for the Master.

As recorded in Psalm 55: 12–14 we read, “For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.”

When someone who is openly opposed to you betrays you it is an expected action. But the bitterness comes when it is someone who is pledged to support and remain loyal to you.

The pain is the result of receiving abuse for love and it is especially tragic when someone responds in hate to the person who has loved and ministered generously to them.

When Judas did the deed for

which he has been known down through the years—the feigned honour in the kiss of betrayal—Jesus called him “friend” (Matthew 26:50).

So, right up to the last, the Saviour was reaching out to the betrayer. If the Master could show love to the one betraying Him, how much more does He show love to those who genuinely wish to serve Him in spite of their failures?

Whatever your sin, however you may have grieved the Lord Jesus, remember His care for Judas and keep in mind that you are dearly loved and that love will never die. So come back to Him with a humbled heart and hear Him call you, “Friend”. Know His arms of love and acceptance will embrace you once more. Indeed He is the friend of sinners (Matthew 11:19).

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