

Prayer Basic training

John 17:12 : Judas Iscariot *While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.*

There are some names that have made their way into every day speech. names like, **Quisling** (he betrayed Norway to the Nazis). **William Joyce** (Lord Haw Haw).

And Judas Iscariot. Today, nobody in the Christian world would call a son Judas, even though the name means "praise" and is great in Old Testament history.

Who was **Judas Iscariot**?

1. *The disciple.*

Why did Jesus call him to be a disciple? Several "**solutions**" have been offered.

One is that Judas was a **victim**.

- Somebody had to betray Jesus and Judas was selected to do it, **by God!**
- Another is that Judas was **Satan's victim**. Jesus said, "One of you is a devil" (John 6:70). The description fits, for Judas, like Satan, was a liar and a murderer (John 8:44).

If Judas was not a **victim**, is it possible he was a **hero**?

- His motives were good. His whole scheme backfired and Jesus was crucified. Humiliated, Judas committed suicide.

Judas was not a **victim**, a **hero**. He was a **lost sinner** who never trusted Jesus Christ.

2. *The traitor.*

Why would Judas do such a thing?

- One suggestion is that it seemed clear to Judas that Jesus would not (or could not) fulfill his Messianic dreams.
- **Judas was not a Galilean**; he came from Kerioth in Judah. It is possible that Judas' nationalistic spirit helped to lead to his downfall.
- **Satan** had several footholds in this man's life.

So why not stay with the movement and get out of it whatever you can?

- Judas was the **treasurer** of the disciple band (John 12:1-8). One of his jobs was to distribute money to the poor (John 12:5 and 13:26-30). John makes it clear that Judas had been pilfering money out of the treasury: "...he was a **thief**, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it" (John 12:

Betraying Jesus would give Judas the satisfaction of meeting all **three** needs at the same time; **his love of money, his growing hatred of Jesus, and his political zeal.**

3. *The suicide.*

But why **suicide**? Why not just flee the country and make the best of it?

- Because Satan is a murderer (John 8:44) and a destroyer (Revelation 9:11). He comes first as the deceiving serpent ("You can get away with this!") but then turns into the destroying lion (1 Peter 5:8).
- He uses despair and guilt to drive people to self-destruction. He preys upon the hopeless and the helpless, and he convinces them that there is no hope or help. Their best solution is to destroy themselves.

4. *The application*

What are the practical **lessons** we can learn from the tragedy of Judas Iscariot?

- **For one thing, Judas** is certainly a witness to the **Person of Jesus Christ**. If there had ever been anything questionable about our Lord's life or ministry, Judas would have known about it and could have used it to oppose Jesus. Instead, Judas confesses that **Jesus was innocent**.
- **Judas is also a warning** against allowing sin to grow in our lives. Sin comes to us as a **guest**, then becomes a **friend**, and then becomes a **master**. Sin grows **gradually**, but it must be dealt with **drastically**.
- **Judas bears witness to the strength of the church**. The church will have its times of success and failure, strength and weakness; **but the church will prevail**.
- **Judas Iscariot** is an example of what can happen when people **half-heartedly** follow Christ and do not fully trust Him.
- **Finally, Judas reminds us** of how close a person can come to the truth, and to salvation, and finally be lost. Judas heard our Lord preach, saw Him perform miracles, and even lived with Him and handled His finances; yet Judas Iscariot died a lost soul.

John Bunyan expressed this awesome truth at the close of his *Pilgrim's Progress*: "Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the gates of heaven...."

Judas went out "and it was night."

"While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light" (John 12:36).