

Christ Betrayed by Judas

Charles Herle (1598-1659)

Luke 22:47

I. The Text Opened

A. Luke 22:47

1. “And while he yet spoke, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him,” (Luke 22:47).
 - a) A combination of majesty and mercy make up the strongest guard against treason.
 - b) The position and power of a king usually strike terror in the hearts of his subjects sufficient to deter treason.
 - c) And when coupled with mercy, they can charm and stroke the soul with love such that it cannot be plotted against.
 - d) And yet the best guard against treason is that which needs no defense, and that is innocence.
2. However, Luke 22:47 records a treasonous act that not only breaks through that double guard of majesty and mercy but even the protection of innocence itself.
 - a) Judas, one of the Lord’s personally chosen twelve apostles, betrays the perfect Christ to a band of soldiers who come to arrest him as if he were a thief or a murderer, (Luke 22:52).
 - b) A fair trial based on real evidence would have pronounced him a true and just man, one in whom not even prejudice itself could find fault, (Mark 12:14, Matt. 27:24).

(1) And yet, he is treacherous.

II. The Doctrine from the Text

A. Doctrine: Judas was a wicked traitor.

1. “Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?” (Prov. 27:4).
 - a) And yet what could you, Judas, envy in Christ?
 - (1) His glory, his purse, and his power were all yours.*
 - (2) He even caused the demons to be obedient to you.*
 - (3) Did you not cast out devils in his name?*
 - (4) And now you take the devil into your own heart and cast out Christ! (John 13:27).*
 - b) Judas, you once left all to follow him, and now you leave him to follow the worst of all you had formerly left.
 - (1) You dipped your hand in the same dish of fellowship with him.*
 - (2) You followed him as master and carried his bag.*
 - (3) And yet you now carry those thirty pieces of silver, your new master, in the bag.*
 - (4) After walking and working alongside the Son of God day after day for years, seeing his miracles and hearing his teaching, how could you possibly decide that a bag of coins was worth trading him for?*
- (a) Yet you sold Christ to the Jews and yourself to the devil in the bargain.*

c) You sold this Master that you betrayed to his death when he came to give himself for your life.

(1) You betrayed him to his enemies for your own personal gain when he came to purchase you with his own blood.

(2) It is as if you chose to sell an invaluable pearl – one which the wise merchant sold all he had to buy, (Matt. 13:44) – for some useless triviality.

(3) This makes your treachery folly, your gain loss, your greediness unthrifty.

d) How useless is your money without your Master?

(1) And how soon does it lose its luster?

(2) Can it buy another Master like Christ? Can it buy you an hour's sleep?

(3) Can it bribe your clamorous tongue of conscience to observe one moment of silence?

(4) No, it is no more than empty promises to your present misery and the beginnings of greater tortures.

(5) It is all quicksilver.

(6) It will not stay; it will not enrich.

(7) It buys nothing but fields of blood and confusion (Acts 1:19).

2. Judas did not so much betray his first Master, Jesus, as his second master, money, betrayed him.

a) Judas betrayed Christ into the hands of malice but gain betrayed Judas into the halter of despair and the rope of death.

b) How could this have happened?

(1) Although Judas had just had his feet washed by the Lord in the upper room, he did not allow Christ to wash his hands and his heart in blood.

(2) And while a greeting is in his mouth and a kiss on his lips, a hell of treason resides in his heart.

c) God may allow hypocrisy to go on at length, to fool the hypocrite into a false hope that he is not only deceiving others but God as well.

(1) "Have we not taught in our streets, and have we not in your name done miracles, and cast out devils?"

(2) This will be the hypocrite's plea in the day of judgment, to see if he might possibly deceive God as he has men.

(3) But like Judas, at his end such a person is shown to be a fool.

(4) For God cannot be blinded with guile nor bribed with gifts.

(5) His throne is in heaven, but his theater is in the heart where he may be sometimes unseen, but never unseeing.

d) What an infinitely great price Christ paid for poor wretched souls that was hardly worth sweeping for, a mite scarcely worth casting into his treasury, (Mark 12).

e) And yet he paid for such souls with his inestimable self.

(1) He ransomed them with the price of his blood, they who are the treasury itself (Col. 2:3).

(2) In this way, they can truly say, "we are bought with a great price," (1 Cor. 6:20).

3. "And while he yet spoke, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him," (Luke 22:47).

a) The aftermath of Judas' betrayal of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane may be the saddest series of events ever recorded in Scripture.

- b) The narrative unfolds in Matthew 27:1-5: When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us?" And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.
4. We are told in Luke 22:3 that this whole plan to betray the Master began when Satan entered Judas.
- a) But once he gets what he wants from him, how quickly the devil casts him off for nothing.
- b) And as soon as Satan's mission was accomplished and Judas was struck with the reality of what he had done, it was more than he could bear.
- (1) *The devil leaves him, and Judas goes to hang himself, which in turn leads him to his own place, (Acts 1:2).*
5. In general, the term, "betray," in Scripture, means to deliver one up to the authorities.
- a) But Judas' betrayal of Christ was much more than a simple delivering him over to the religious and governmental authorities of that day.
- (1) *It was a treacherous, treasonous act of one who used his intimate relationship with Jesus, (chosen as one of the twelve apostles by the Lord himself), for his selfish gain.*
- (a) *Judas was a spiritual traitor.*
- (2) *Further, he knew the Master was innocent.*
- (a) *And finally, he did what he did under the cover of darkness and the pretense of affection and friendship, (a friendly greeting accompanied by a kiss).*

III. The Text Applied

A. Desperately Wicked

1. Judas' life is the perfect demonstration of what the prophet is describing in Jeremiah 17:9 about the condition of each and every one of us: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
- a) Judas lived and walked and listened to and watched the Master daily for three years.
- b) His best friends were the likes of John, Peter, Matthew, Thomas, Luke, and James. Besides, Jesus wasn't the only one performing miracles, or casting out devils, for Christ empowered his own to do likewise.
- (1) *So, of course, Judas was among them.*
2. We may find ourselves asking, "How then, after all this, could Judas possibly find it in his heart to betray the Master?"
- a) What betrayal!
- b) Judas' heart was deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.
- (1) *And our hearts are no different; without the transformational power of the Gospel of God and the Holy Spirit working in us for salvation, we are all capable of doing what Judas did.*
- (2) *Our betrayal of Christ would take place in a different context, a more sophisticated social climate, and may not appear at first glance to be as blatant.*
- (3) *But God sees it as the same.*

(4) And the cost of betrayal is also the same – a bitter end and an eternity of torment, forever separated from God and everything good.

3. What will be the sense of all his loss?
 - a) It is sad to consider.
 - b) Judas will see his fellow apostles on their seats, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel at the end, (Matt. 19:28), and himself among his now fellow devils, (John 6:70).
 - c) He will tremble at the judgment seat when he hears his Master, who once so kindly gave him bread to dip in his own bowl, (John 13:26), and washed his feet, now giving him his sentence to be bound hands and feet, (Matthew 10), and cast into utter darkness.
 - (1) He will there see those devils, which before he had power to cast out, now to have power to cast him into endless torments.*
4. Judas may have eaten the bread that Jesus broke (not communion) but shared with his apostles at the Last Supper meal.
 - a) But he never tasted the Bread of Life or drank the Living Water, though it was available to him on a daily basis.
 - b) His Christianity, his apostleship, was in word only, and not in truth.
 - c) He successfully fooled others as to his nature and purposes, even the other apostles, (Matt. 26:19-22).
 - d) He may have even fooled himself into thinking he would have options to repent after the fact (Matt. 27:3).
 - (1) But he certainly never fooled the Lord.*
 - (2) Jesus himself said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70).*
5. The cost of betrayal is too high to take lightly.
 - a) This is why we must guard our hearts with all diligence, (Prov. 4:23), and work to ensure that we maintain a personal, thriving relationship with the Lord so we never have to pay that price.
 - b) We are to inquire to the Lord how we may be betraying him our day-in-day-out life.
 - c) How our unloving desires betray him.