

DAY 4

# The Betrayal

## Read: Matthew 26:3-16

<sup>3</sup>Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, <sup>4</sup>and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. <sup>5</sup>But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”

<sup>6</sup>Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, <sup>7</sup>a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. <sup>8</sup>And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? <sup>9</sup>For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.” <sup>10</sup>But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>11</sup>For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. <sup>12</sup>In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. <sup>13</sup>Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

<sup>14</sup>Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup>and said, “What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?” And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup>And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.

## **Additional Reading:**

Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-11; John 12:1-8.

## **Reflect**

Today, we are going to look at one of the saddest events in the Bible—Judas, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, betrayed Him. By this time in the story, Judas had been a disciple of Jesus for a few years now. In choosing to betray his Master, we see an irony in our own lives and hearts.

The chief priests and the elders had been looking for a way to arrest Jesus and kill Him, but they did not know how to do this until Judas went to them and asked them what he would get if he turned Jesus in. The offer of thirty pieces of silver is roughly comparable to four months’ wages. Judas agreed and began taking action.

How could this be—Judas was a disciple of Jesus, and yet he sought to betray Him? This is the irony of being with Jesus and still betraying Him, the irony of walking with Him, and yet our hearts can still be far away from Him.

The sad truth is that a person can seemingly follow Christ and still love other things more than Him. Judas was blinded by his greed. He loved the silver that the chief priests offered more than he loved Christ.

Matthew also tells us the story of a woman who, unlike Judas, saw Jesus as her greatest treasure. To show her devotion, this woman poured the most expensive oil she had to anoint Jesus. She remains unnamed and we don't know what her circumstances were, but we know that she regarded Jesus as more valuable than anything else she had. The oil she poured is equivalent to almost a year's worth of wages. It was more than what the chief priest offered to Judas. In fact, when Judas saw this woman's devotion and what—for him—was a waste, he was indignant and went to the chief priests to put his plan into action. Perhaps he was thinking of what he could still gain for himself since the woman had already wasted her expensive offering and he could not make something of that anymore.

We can all relate to this story. Do we really see the value of Christ in our lives? Is He our greatest treasure? Do we believe that He alone will ultimately satisfy us, even when other things compete for our attention and devotion? We can look like we are walking with God, and yet our hearts can be far away from Him. The world, our flesh, and the enemy will always try to offer something more enticing for us to love more than Christ.

The thirty pieces of silver—or its equivalent today—can pull us away from our devotion to God. May we choose Christ over anything the world or religion can offer. But let us not be misled—we can not do this on our own. We need the grace of God and the power of God’s Spirit to help us see Christ as our real treasure and live in a way that pleases Him. When we see how valuable and beautiful Jesus is, ultimately God gives us the strength to fight for our love for Him above all else.

This week, **may we see Jesus as our greatest treasure.** He is more valuable than whatever we can see and experience in this world. May our hearts truly be captivated by Him, and may we be fully devoted to Him alone.

## **Respond**

- Why do you think Judas responded the way he did? What price might tempt you, if any, to compromise and set aside your love and devotion to Christ?
- Why do you think the woman responded the way she did? Who is Christ to you? Is He your greatest treasure? What are you willing to give Him today?
- Pray that you would see God for who He is and for the grace to respond in a way that honors Him. Ask God to reveal areas in your life He wants to adjust and work on. Pray that you would be fully devoted to Him.