

**Sellout
Matt 26:14-16**

Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

1. **I find that the bible is full of contrasts:**
 - a. **What we should do / not do; right decisions/wrong, Good kings/bad kings...**
 - b. **In last weeks account of Mary anointing Jesus with spikenard, we witnessed an act of true worship.**
 - c. **At about the same time, we see an account of Judas, except Judas was heading in a different direction altogether.**
 - d. **The contrast is stunning: Mary showing her love and devotion in a way that was tremendously costly to her; Judas selling Jesus out for the price of a common slave.**
2. **Interestingly, the name Judas means "praise". I can't help but think of when Judas was born, how his parents must have, like all parents, been so excited at having a child!**
 - a. **Going through the process of picking a name, a very important ritual, back then even moreso than now.**
 - b. **Perhaps it was his mother that came up with the suggestion, "Let's name him *praise*, because we want to praise the Lord for giving him to us, and he will be a man that will praise the Lord all the days of his life!" (ahh, the hopes of a mother!)**
3. **Iscariot denotes the area from where he came from, probably near the town of Carioth, in the southern region of Israel. People from that part of the country tended to be wealthy, and well educated, and maybe that is why they made Judas the treasurer of the group.**
 - a. **But something was not right with Judas, and Jesus knew it!**

John 13:10-11

Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

- b. **Judas heard the same teachings, saw the same miracles, participated in the same ministry: but I didn't seem to have the same affect on him.**

Zech 11:4-16

4 This is what the LORD my God says: "Pasture the flock marked for slaughter. 5 Their buyers slaughter them and go unpunished. Those who sell them say,

'Praise the LORD, I am rich!' Their own shepherds do not spare them. 6 For I will no longer have pity on the people of the land," declares the LORD. "I will hand everyone over to his neighbor and his king. They will oppress the land, and I will not rescue them from their hands." 7 So I pastured the flock marked for slaughter, particularly the oppressed of the flock. Then I took two staffs and called one Favor and the other Union, and I pastured the flock. 8 In one month I got rid of the three shepherds. The flock detested me, and I grew weary of them 9 and said, "I will not be your shepherd. Let the dying die, and the perishing perish. Let those who are left eat one another's flesh." 10 Then I took my staff called Favor and broke it, revoking the covenant I had made with all the nations. 11 It was revoked on that day, and so the afflicted of the flock who were watching me knew it was the word of the LORD.

12 I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"-the handsome price at which they priced me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD to the potter.

14 Then I broke my second staff called Union, breaking the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. 15 Then the LORD said to me, "Take again the equipment of a foolish shepherd. 16 For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat of the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs.
(from New International Version)

- 4. The prophet Zechariah penned these words some 500 years before the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - a. A close look reveals that this prophecy is directed at the events surrounding the Messiah.**
 - b. The references to the slaughter, the sound of roaring lions, the attacking of the land, the reference to cannibalism – all of these things were fulfilled when the Romans destroyed the city in 70 AD.**
 - c. The reference to the firing of the three shepherds, a reference to the roles of the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel, the “shepherds which had not cared for the sheep”, roles that ceased to exist after the siege of Jerusalem.**
 - d. The reference to the “worthless shepherd”, , a reference to the coming Anti-Christ, whom Israel will receive, yet he will “eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces”**

5. But listen again to verses 12-13:

I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter"-the handsome price at which they priced me! So I took the

thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD to the potter.

a. Compare them to verse 14-16 of Matt 26:

Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. 16 So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

- 6. Wow - You have to wonder: "Did Judas not know his bible?" I believe he had to be familiar with those verses. Every Jewish boy was brought up memorizing the law and the prophets (quite unlike our schools today!).**
 - a. I wonder if the scripture in Zechariah popped into Judas head when the priest uttered the words "thirty pieces of silver."**
 - b. Sort of like that feeling you get when you make a terrible decision, but you are not sure if you can face retreating from it.**
- 7. Now we can look at Judas and say "yep, he was a sellout, he betrayed the Lord!"**
 - a. But we want to be careful not to make him a victim of circumstance, or that his fate was set and he had no choice.**
 - b. See, prophecy, which clearly foretold Judas' actions, is not a situation where God saying "this is what has to happen, no one has a choice", as if Judas was cursed by God to fulfill this role.**
 - c. But rather it's a situation where God, who can see the future, is foretelling what *will* happen. Judas could have made a different choice (now, had Judas *not* betrayed Christ, Christ still would have gone to the cross, just through difference circumstances.)**
 - d. It is the sovereignty of God, along with the choices of man, which are foreknown by God. (try and figure that out and you'll go crazy!)**
- 8. Yet we also have to understand that all things that happen, happen for a reason and a purpose, and there is always something for us to learn from the situation.**

Rom 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

a. So what do we learn from Judas?

Judas heart was on “this world”.

9. The fact that Judas was a thief is telling, but see his theft was not the root problem, but rather a **symptom of his root problem – the condition of his heart.**
- a. With all this talk about a “kingdom”, I believe Judas was waiting for Jesus to overthrow the Romans, and usher in the “the kingdom of God”.
 - b. And Judas, as the treasurer of the group, was thinking “hey, I’ll be the finance minister.”
 - c. But when it became apparent that instead of heading to the throne, Jesus was heading to the cross, I believe Judas became disillusioned, disappointed that his dream of power and wealth and influence was just not going to work out.
 - d. I think it is completely feasible that Judas would think “*man, I am not going to waste the last three years, I’m not doing all this for nothing*”, and so he went to the chief priests and asked them what they would offer him. It was his “backup plan”.
10. Why do I think that he might have thought that? Because I have thought it (OK not recently). It is a totally *human* thought to have.
- a. In other words, Judas missed the bigger picture... he might have thought about what Jesus had said earlier:

Matt 16:25

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

- b. What did Jesus really mean by this? That we need to jump in I don’t think so... I believe He was talking about there our heart is... perhaps the key word in that verse is *desire*.
11. In other words, if my desire, my focus, is getting my “payoff” here and now, living my life for me, doing what I want, chasing my desires...
- a. I am going to come up short – every single time.
 - b. Fact is – the more we get what we think we want, after a little while it just isn’t that awesome anymore, and we something new – the next new thing.
 - c. Every time we get a shiny new toy, after a little while it doesn’t shine anymore. We need another shiny new toy.
 - d. *(Recently I was reading about a well-known young actress, who was one of the most promising in Hollywood, but now her life is a series of one embarrassing situation after another. I don’t have to say the name, because you could fill in the name with any one of a long list of young people that had it all – and yet live a miserable existence – never fulfilled.)*

- e. It is a truth in live no matter if you are a Christian, when you seek to gain... you will lose.

12. It can happen to Christians when they lose heart when things don't work out...

- a. Business fails, relationship goes sour, etc ...
- b. "I thought if I became a Christian all these things would work out"
- c. It is an indicator of where our focus is – am I looking to God to make my life easier? To make m business successful?
- d. Or do I understand that this life is NOT about this life? This life is about HIS LIFE

John 14:6

"I am the way, the truth, and the life.

John 10:10

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

13. In other words – if I will lose my life – surrender fully to God – SELL OUT to Him, that is when I will find life – EVERY SINGLE TIME!

- a. Life with meaning, purpose, fulfillment, and yes blessings!
- b. Judas had choices – we all have choices – do we see them?
- c. Look at the contrast: 30 pcs of silver vs abundant life.

14. I am not suggesting that we are "selling Jesus out" like Judas did, but are we settling for 30 pieces of silver?

- a. Are we reaching for 30 pieces of silver, and in the process losing out on the abundant life that God has for us?
- b. Am I able to look beyond what is in front of me, to see beyond the tangible things of this world, to step out in faith, give myself 100% to God, and TRUST that it will be worth it?
- c. It will – EVERY SINGLE TIME

Isa 55:1-2

Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

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