

trade in your relationship with Jesus for something else just like Judas?

*What was Judas' response when he saw the result of his betrayal? How did Judas try to wipe away his guilt?*

When we trade away Jesus for something else, we quickly find out how incomparably valuable our relationship to Him is. The weight of that realization plunged Judas into a despair that ended in his death. But we can prepare ourselves in advance to resist that temptation to abandon Jesus. You can prepare yourself through hope and repentance.

At the point you are tempted to abandon Jesus for something else, you need to remember the eternal hope you have outweighs your immediate desires.

*Describe the hope you have for eternity and what makes it so valuable.*

*Joel 2:13 NLT - 13 Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead." Return to the LORD your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.*

If you should fall to the temptation to replace Jesus with anything else, and you feel the pain of remorse, you have a remedy, and it is not to be filled with grief.

*What is it Joel says we are to do when we find ourselves far from God, and what can we expect when we act?*

### WRAP-UP

Judas' betrayal grew from realizing Jesus was not going to meet his agenda. God's plan is not always what we'd expect or choose. But if we turn elsewhere to meet our own needs, we reject Jesus, and lose our eternal hope which is far more valuable than anything else.

### MEMORY VERSE.

*Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead." Return to the LORD your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.*  
- Joel 2:13 NLT

### PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life \_\_\_\_\_

*Challenge.- This week pause to reflect on the value of your eternal hope.*

## “Traitor!”

### Mark•Grace•Sacrifice•Hope- #5

### INTRODUCTION

Any betrayal causes us pain but the betrayal of a friend leaves even deeper wounds. Judas was one of Jesus' 12 closest friends, yet he was a traitor. What happened that caused someone who followed Jesus so closely to turn and betray Him? Could we also become a traitor to Jesus?

### Ice Breaker

Do you have many friends who are fans of a rival team? (Giant/Dodger)

### Key Passage

*Mark 14:42 NLT - Up, let's be going. Look, my betrayer is here!"*

### STUDY QUESTIONS

#### 1. Not What I Expected

*Mark 14:41-44 NLT - 41 When he returned to them the third time, he said, "Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But no--the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Up, let's be going. Look, my betrayer is here!" 43 And immediately, even as Jesus said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a crowd of men armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the elders. 44 The traitor, Judas, had given them a prearranged signal: "You will know which one to arrest when I greet him with a kiss. Then you can take him away under guard."*

Jesus knew He was being betrayed. He had told the disciples so during the Last Supper, and even when He saw the crowd approaching, it was no surprise to Him. He said to the disciples, “the *betrayer (paradidōmi)*” is here. That means one who delivers up treacherously into the hands of another. Judas was handing Jesus over.

*What was the signal prearranged to let the guards know who to arrest? Wouldn't it be easier for Judas to point Jesus out and say, "This is the guy, arrest him?" Why do you think Judas chose a kiss as the signal? What would casual onlookers think of him kissing Jesus?*

*Luke 22:48 NLT - 48 But Jesus said, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"*

Judas may have deceived others when he kissed Jesus, but Jesus knew exactly what that kiss meant. In the cultural context, a kiss (*philēma*) was a sign of fraternal affection. Christians were accustomed to welcome or dismiss their companions in the faith with a kiss. It should have signaled solidarity and respect, but this kiss did not.

At the root of Judas' betrayal was his disappointment in Jesus as Messiah. He was not the Messiah Judas was expecting. Jesus was not doing what Judas wanted Him to do, so perhaps Judas was hoping to make something happen by turning Jesus in.

Like so many, Judas would have been looking for a "Military" Messiah. The people longed to be freed from Roman oppression, not to be freed from their sins.

*A military Messiah would hate the Romans. What did Jesus say about the enemy?*

*Matthew 5:44 NKJV - 44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.*

*A Military Messiah would have supported the religious leaders. What was Jesus' opinion of the religious leaders?*

*Matthew 23:27 NKJV - 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead [men's] bones and all uncleanness.*

*A Military Messiah would amass money for His movement. How did Jesus view money?*

*Matthew 6:24 NLT - 24 "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.*

## 2. Temptation to Betray

In the Gospel of John, we see a moment when Judas had an epiphany where he realized Jesus wasn't going to fit his plans. Judas' source of funds was being blocked, and Jesus was planning for his burial. And when Jesus was gone, what would happen to him?

*John 12:3-7 NLT - 3 Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance. 4 But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, 5 "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor." 6 Not that he cared for the poor--he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples' money, he often stole some for himself. 7 Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial.*

*What was Judas' next move after the anointing of Jesus in Bethany? (Mat 26:13-15)*

*Matthew 26:13-15 NLT - 13 I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deed will be remembered and discussed." 14 Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests 15 and asked, "How much will you pay me to betray Jesus to you?" And they gave him thirty pieces of silver.*

Judas was looking for Jesus to step in and take power, but that wasn't Jesus' plan. So, Judas tried to force his own agenda. He went to the chief priests with an offer to hand over Jesus.

*Judas had focused on how God's power through the Messiah would benefit him. When it looked like this Messiah wasn't helping him, Judas went elsewhere. We can be guilty of the same attitude. When following Jesus doesn't benefit us as we would like, we are ready to look elsewhere to have our needs met. Can you think of examples when people look to God to get something for themselves, and when that didn't happen, they leave God to get their need met elsewhere?*

## 3. The Moment Beyond Betrayal

*Matthew 27:3-5 NLT - 3 When Judas, who had betrayed him, realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse. So he took the thirty pieces of silver back to the leading priests and the elders. 4 "I have sinned," he declared, "for I have betrayed an innocent man." "What do we care?" they retorted. "That's your problem." 5 Then Judas threw the silver coins down in the Temple and went out and hanged himself.*

None of us wants to admit that we could betray Jesus. But what do we do when Jesus doesn't meet our expectations? When problems with your relationships, your job or your health are not resolved, are you tempted to