

June 18th, 2023 – (full notes)

“Judas Loved Money More Than He Loved Jesus”

Luke 9:10

The last time we were together we studied **Luke 9:1-9**, where Jesus sends out of the Twelve, after giving them authority over demons and diseases, in order for them to bring healing to the people while proclaiming the kingdom of God.

Judas Iscariot was one of the Twelve who was sent out, and even though we know from the Gospel narratives that he was not a true believer and follower of Jesus Christ, he would have been able to cast out demons and heal diseases.

Two questions come to mind: Did Jesus know that Judas was an unbeliever and that he would betray Him? And if so, why would Jesus choose Judas as one of the original Twelve Disciples?

I believe the answer might be found in a prophecy which speaks of Christ's betrayal (**Psalm 41:9**), “Even My close friend in whom I trusted, who ate My bread, has *lifted up his heel* against Me.” (*turn against, become an enemy*)

How do we know **Psalm 41:9** is speaking of Jesus and His betrayer Judas?

Let us look to the Scriptures for God's answers.

Please turn to **Matthew 26:14-25...**

Please turn to **John 13:1-30...**

In **Luke 6:12-15**, we are told of the time when Jesus chose twelve men from among all of His followers, who would be named as apostles.

In **Luke 9:1-9**, Jesus gives the Twelve Apostles power and authority to cast out demons and heal the sick. Judas was one of the Twelve and they were all sent out with power and authority from God. But did Judas cast out demons?

Luke's narrative doesn't specifically tell us what Judas or any of the other Twelve did when they went out, only that (**Luke 9:10**), “When the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done. Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida.”

According to the Scriptures (**Matthew 10:1; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1**), Jesus gave authority to all of the Twelve, including Judas, and they went out under the power of the Holy Spirit, performing signs and wonders, while preaching the gospel.

But, if Judas wasn't a true believer how could he do these supernatural things like casting out demons and healing people of diseases? Did the Holy Spirit come upon people who were not believers?

Scripture does record an incident when the Spirit of God came upon an unbeliever who was then empowered for a specific purpose. In **Numbers 24:2** we are told that Balaam, “lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe; and the Spirit of God came upon him.” He was enabled to prophesy by the Spirit of God, even though he was a false prophet, as the Scriptures indicate.

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2Peter 2:1, “False prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.” **15**, “forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of **Balaam**, the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.” [cf. **Jude 1-13**, **Revelation 2:1-14**].

But, can an unbeliever cast out demons and perform miracles?

Please turn to **Matthew 7:15-23**... Jesus chose Judas, knowing he would betray Him. And as we read earlier in **John 13:18**, Jesus says to His apostles, “I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled.” And then He quotes David in **Psalms 41:9**: “He who ate My bread has lifted his heel against Me.”

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, affirmed Judas’s betrayal as fulfilling Scripture.

See **Acts 1:6-26**... Every detail had been foretold concerning the Messiah’s betrayal, death, burial, and resurrection.

1Corinthians 15:3-5, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”

All these events were fulfilled, just as the Scriptures said they would be, because (**2Timothy 3:16**) “All Scripture is inspired by God” [lit. God-breathed, i.e., from God Himself]. And that is why Scripture speaks without error concerning the past, the present, the future, the seen and the unseen world, because only God is Omniscient, which literally means all-knowing, and the Bible was written by God through 40 men, over 1500 years, on three continents in three languages.

2Peter 1:20-21, “Know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

John 6:64 says, “Jesus knew from the beginning who it was who would betray Him.” Jesus chose Judas knowing what he was going to do; in fact, Jesus exposed how the most detestable and heinous act of treachery in the history of the world, the betrayal and subsequent murder of God’s Son, was clearly the sovereign plan of God to save us.

Even the most horrible sins in the world can be used by God for His divine purposes to save those who will but believe in Him (See **Acts 2:21-24, 36-38**). Jesus sovereignly chose a man who was destined for hell and damnation, including him among the Twelve, and giving him power over unclean spirits and diseases.

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Listen! Religious associations, rituals, ceremonies and even miracle-working power are not necessarily evidence of genuine salvation.

Judas walked alongside Jesus for three years, and he was one of only twelve men, out of all of Israel, who was personally selected to hear, see, touch, and experience God’s Son up close and personal; yet, Judas died in his sins, apart from the saving grace that comes through faith in Christ, to all those who believe in Him.

In **John 5:39-40**, Jesus was talking to some Scribes who thought that just by having scrolls of the Old Testament prophets could somehow save them, to which Jesus said, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.”

Judas is an example of those referenced in **Matthew 7:22-23**, “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles? ‘And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”

What a vivid illustration demonstrating the hard truth that just knowing what is in the Bible won’t save you; for you must spiritually hear, believe, and obey what God’s Word says concerning Jesus Christ, in order to be saved.

No wonder Peter proclaimed (**Acts 4:12**), “There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” [only that of Jesus Christ: crucified, resurrected, coming again]. **Romans 10:9-10**, “if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.” **13**, “for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Jesus said He kept all of the Twelve from apostasy [rejecting or turning away from Him] except Judas (**John 17:12**), “and not one of them perished but the son of perdition [*hell, damnation, condemnation*], so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.” In **John 13:18**, Jesus says, I know the ones I have chosen but *it is* that the Scripture may be fulfilled,” And then he quotes **Psalms 41:9**, ‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.’”

Thirty pieces of silver is all it took for Judas to sellout the Son of God who loved him and had come to save him. Judas traded eternity with God for an eternity in hell, because he loved money more than he loved Jesus.

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Judas said in **Matthew 27:4**, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” Judas acknowledged that Jesus was innocent; but Judas never repented of his sins, nor did he believe in Jesus as his Savior; and so, he remained guilty for his own sins.

Jesus said (**John 8:24**), “Therefore you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He* [God the Son, the Savior], you will die in your sins.”

See **Romans 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 8:1**.

Let us all be very clear that it is Jesus Christ who saves us, we can do nothing to obtain righteousness, and therefore we must believe in Him as Savior and confess Him as Lord, if we are to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Please turn to **Matthew 13:44...** Palestine had been a battleground for hundreds of years, families buried their valuables so their enemies couldn't take or destroy them. There were no banks or depositories and so, the practice of hiding valuables in a storage box or jar, buried in the ground, was common.

Sometimes the owners of the valuables were killed or perhaps deported to another land, and their valuables would be all but lost or forgotten, until someone came across the hiding place, perhaps a tenant farmer working the field, or someone just passing through the area.

The man in this parable finds a treasure, he then goes and sells everything he has in order to purchase the field, so that he can have the treasure it contains.

Notice, the man doesn't steal the treasure, but instead he buys the field it is in, using all of his resources to obtain it. He gives up everything in order to have the treasure that has been hidden until now, like the kingdom of heaven.

When lost, lonely, confused and spiritually ill people come upon God's loving gift of forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus, they will either value it above everything else in the world or they will continue to reject it .

Matthew 13:45-46... This merchant was a wholesale buyer and reseller of merchandise, specifically this merchant bought and sold pearls (the diamonds of the ancient world, great wealth in a small package, that could be carried in a pocket inside your clothing, transported unnoticed, or easily hidden).

This man is searching for the most valuable pearl and when he finds it, he is willing to sell everything he has in order to obtain it.

Jesus Christ, God's Son, gave His life for us, so we might eventually and eternally live in heaven with Him; but during our time on earth we are to live for Him by His power and provision, through the riches of His Grace.

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Ephesians 2:6-7, “God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

Matthew 6:24, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” **31-33**, “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; but your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Salvation through Jesus Christ and eternal life with God, is the most valuable thing in the universe, now and forever! And so, our attitude about such things should be like Pauls (**Philippians 4:12-13**), “I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” **19-20**, “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

And to that, all God’s children can confidently say, Amen!

Pastor Mike

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