

As Jesus conducted his ministry on earth there were different levels of commitment that people had toward him. There was: the multitude, the five hundred (1 Cor 15:6); the 120 (Acts 1:15); the seventy-two (Luke 10:1); The Twelve (Matt 10:1); The Three (Mark 9:2)

So, in our study of the apostles, we will start with the one who is in every way the furthest away from Jesus. One who never actually came to true faith in Jesus. His name was Judas. In every listing of the apostle, Judas is always last. He is often listed in the gospels with the label “traitor” or “betrayed.” (Matt. 10:4; 26:25; 27:3 Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16; John 6:71; 12:4; 18:2,5)

His notorious reputation has even impacted the English language. Websters Collegiate Dictionary (1981) defines Judas as: the disciple who betrayed Jesus in the gospel accounts. TRAITOR. Esp. one who will betray under the guise of friendship. PEEPHOLE, also called a Judas hole or Judas window.

For those who would deny Christianity’s influence on our culture, the use of the name Judas in the English language certainly proves otherwise. Do you know of any other negative connotations for the name Judas?

The name Judas was a popular name. It is a form of Judah which means “praised.” Jesus had a brother named Judas (Matt. 13:55). Jesus called another man named Judas to be an apostle. (John 14:22)

Judas Iscariot did not begin with Jesus as a traitor. Jesus certainly knew that Judas would betray Him- He was one of the twelve whom Jesus prayed about and called (Luke 6:12-16.) Judas treasurer of the ministry and over time he began steal money from the ministry. (John 12:4-6)

“The story of Judas is often repeated, a person can be numbered with the people of God, serve on church boards, be active on committees, take communion, but go out to covetous practices and raw business deals, and at last to a lost eternity- right from church” *Twelve Chosen Men*

Two theories of Judas’ downfall.

1. Some Christians believe that Judas was just a misguided patriot who wanted to pressure Jesus into taking on the role of kings immediately. As Jesus revealed that he was not going to overthrow the Roman empire, Judas became disillusioned with Jesus. This theory minimized His treachery, but Jesus did not. Jesus called him “a devil” (John 6:70-71) and “the one doomed to destruction” (John 17:12)
2. Some Christians believe Judas had no choice- he was a scapegoat, and certainly John 17:12 would support this. To them Judas was simply playing the role handed to him by God. However, Judas recognized his offense. (Matt. 27:3-4) he knew it was his own fault. The Story of Judas shows how man’s choice and God’s sovereignty blend in the same events. There is a mystery within Judas’ story that we cannot fully comprehend. That he has destined to destruction yet he himself was responsible. We are all sinners by birth, and sinners by choice. This is what Judas was as well. H was on the path of destruction when Jesus called Him- he chose to stay on that path.

Steps of Judas' downfall.

1. He was resistant to Jesus' teachings and plans. Jn. 6:56-62, 71.

2. Jesus openly rebuked him in front of others. John 12:1-6

3. His love of money -even robbing God. John 12:6; Matt. 26:14-16; 1 Tim 6:6-11

Warnings from Jesus

1. **Washing the disciples' feet. John 13:10-11**

2. **During the Passover meal. Matt. 26:21-25**

3. **Jesus Pronouncement. John 13:23-27**

The Kiss

Judas knew where the Roman soldiers could find Jesus in a vulnerable place. This was the information he traded on. Matt. 26:44-51

The End of Judas' Story. Matthew 27:1-5, Acts 1:16-19

Judas did not just wake up one day and randomly have the thought, "I am going to make some money and betray Jesus."

His downfall and that choice was the result of a progression of choices and thoughts. It was a process of erosion. The true believer in Jesus will persevere to the end. They will continue in the process of following of Jesus the whole way to heaven. John 6:66-69.

II Timothy 3:14-15 *"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."*