

Hanging Out with Jesus

Stories about Jesus from the Gospels

Betraying Jesus for Money

Unedited Transcript

Matthew 27:1-10, Luke 22:66-71, Acts 1:18-19

Good morning, men! Please go in your bibles to Matthew 27:1. Let's begin this morning our series with a shout out. I'm very excited about this one, last week we did somebody in Colombia, Bogota. This week we are doing the Men's Ministry of IESP Church in Chula Vista, CA. Group of 80 men who have been meeting for 6 years on Mondays at 7:00 pm at the church using the Video Bible Study. Their leader is Enrique Mellado and we are looking for a Field Representative for the Chula Vista, CA area. I wonder if you were to join me in giving a rousing men the very welcome to the men's ministry at IESP church? One, two, three, hoorah! Welcome guys, we are really glad to have you with us!

The name of the series is Hanging Out With Jesus. Today we're going to talk about the story of Judas. Betraying Jesus For Money is the title of the message. I went online this morning and I looked for the hundred least popular names for baby boys. Judas wasn't even on the list, nor was Ichabod. I did look up Judas and its popularity over the years since 1880. It's interesting, according to social security administration, they report names of babies that have been used five or more times. In the years between 1880 and 1968 social security reported no babies. It could have been four or three or two or one who didn't need that, but until 1969 nobody named their baby Judas. It's interesting, I guess it's a reflection of the times. There are ten years between then and now, no babies, or less than five babies have been reported as having been named Judas. Since 1993 there have been babies named Judas every year. It's a little bit of an increase, I didn't do any kind of regression analysis to figure out what exactly the trajectory of that is and all that, if I even said that right. If you didn't know, I shouldn't have said that because you would have been confused and thought I actually knew what I was talking about. The point is that it looks like a little bit of reflection of the times where people have lost the whole memory of the Judas story. We're going to bring that back to life this morning.

What happens when we betray Jesus for money?

Let's start by looking at the text and what happens when we betray Jesus for money. Matthew 27:1 "Early in the morning all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death." You'll notice on your outline there's a passage here in another part of the bible, a parallel passage which gives a little bit more amplification of that. I think it's in Luke or John, I can't remember. We're not going to look at that. We kind of processed through the trial in previous messages, but you can look at that later if you want to. What we want to do, though, is look at this story. "So they bound him, led him away and handed him over the Pilate, the governor. When Judas who had betrayed him saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse," interesting, "and he returned the 30 silver coins. He made restitution to the chief priest and elders. And then he said, 'I have sinned, I have sinned.' And he said, 'for I have betrayed innocent blood.'"

What's obvious in this text is that Judas betrayed Jesus for money and he knew it. He knew he had done something sinful, but why did he do it? He did it for the money. John 12:6 tells us that he was a thief, that he regularly stole money from the common purse of the disciples. In life there are men who follow Jesus. As it turns out, Judas almost certainly, I'm not 100% certain, but Jesus said that in John 17 "I have not lost any except one, the son of perdition given over to destruction." I don't know if that was the destruction of his soul or the destruction of his body. Whatever the case, Judas went to the left when he should have gone to the right. In this life right now there are men who follow Jesus.

Hopefully no one in this room or online is following Jesus, but not on the basis of an abiding faith and surrender to Jesus. That said, every week multiple times every week I run into men or I hear about men who have done a Romans 1, they have exchanged the truth of God for a lie and the glory of God for an idol. When men make idols, there are a couple of ways that you can make an idol. There's a couple of ways you can go off the track here. You can make an exclusive idol. In other words you can completely exclude Christ from your life. You can do that. You can be in an immoral sexual relationship with one woman. You can have an exclusive immoral relationship, you can do that. You can also commit adultery. You can be married to one woman and be living a sexually immoral life with another woman.

You can do the same thing with God, spiritual adultery. You can actually be a Christian and still commit spiritual adultery. In fact the bible calls idolatry, calls it spiritual adultery. In the case of Judas, he was following Jesus. In the case of many men that we meet every week, they are following Jesus. Some of them actually believe in Jesus. I honestly don't know, I want to give Judas the benefit of the doubt. It's hard to but I'd like to give him the benefit of the doubt and say that he actually did believe in Jesus, but he went to the left. He exchanged the truth of God for a lie, the glory of God for an idol, and he was given over to the consequences of that.

This was by the sovereignty of God, just like it is for those of us who decide that we want to make idols God will give us over to that and he does it sovereignly according to Romans 8:20. Falling for the whole of creation, us included have been subjected to futility or frustration or meaningless, not by our own will but by the will of the one who subjected us, God. Why? In hope, in hope that the whole creation will be delivered from it's bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of light. We have the hope that all of these frustrations are going to bring us into the glorious freedom of the children of light. We have the same hope for every man who has ever turned to the left. Our hope is that because he's turned to the left, as he increasingly goes to the left, more and more futility, more and more frustration, more and more meaninglessness that that is going to bring him to a point of repentance. That's not what happens to Judas. That's not what happens to Judas. We'll get to that.

Let's take a look now at the crowd he was running with. When you go to the left, you go with the left crowd. You don't go with the right crowd. When you got to the left, this crowd has no allegiance to you. The ethic of money is that I have more money than you do and I want to keep it that way, that's the money ethic. The gospel ethic is different. I have more faith than you but I want you to have all the faith that I have and more. Two very different approaches to life, the money ethic and the gospel ethic. He was running with the money crowd because he was a thief, he wanted money. He sold Jesus out of money and here is what happens. He says "I have sinned and I betrayed innocent blood and they replied him, 'What is that to us? We don't care about that. We don't care about you. We got what we wanted. What is that to us?'"

Any of us who have ever gone to the left, we've all gone to the left at some point or another, when you go to the left, you know that as you betray the right and then have remorse, the people on the left, they

are going to betray you. You're going to be left high and dry. You're going to be left alone. You're not going to have any friends. You're going to reject God's plan for your life, you're going to divorce your wife and then all of your friends are going to abandon you. You're going to be left out in a little tiny six, seven square foot apartment all by yourself, lonely, friendless. What's going to happen? Whatever happens, it's not going to be good. Let's look what happens to Judas.

"What is that to us' they replied. 'That's your responsibility.' Judas threw the money into the temple and left and then he went out and he hanged himself." Oops! I wonder what Judas would have done if he would have been in a small group. I wonder how things might have turned out differently if he had been in an accountability group and had a few brothers who cared about him and were doing what brothers do for each other, but it didn't happen. "The chief priest then picked up the coins and said, 'it is against the law to put this money into the treasury since it is blood money.'" They knew what they had done, so they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field.

There was a field, there's a place there, a traditional site still today where potters went. There is a special kind of red clay down there they used, the potters went down there. They made pottery so they called it the potter's field. It's not a paupers field, although it is that now, but a potter's field has a burial place for foreigners because of not wanting to defile the remains of true Israelites. This is why it is called the field of blood to this day. Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled. They took the 30 silver coins, the price set by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter's field as the Lord commanded me." What's the application in all this for you and me? Everyone betrays Jesus for money. Sooner or later everyone betrays Jesus for money. Who among us would claim, is there anyone among us that will claim that we've never betrayed Jesus for money?

It could be that you as a Christian withhold important product information from the prospect knowing that if the prospect knew that, they wouldn't buy the product? I hope that's not what happened to me with me with my trailer hitch by the way, when my camper fell off my trailer hitch. Or maybe it is using the name of Jesus for personal gain, telling people you're a Christian so that you can get them to do business for you. That's betraying Jesus for money. Or maybe it's doing shoddy work as a believer, taking the full pay but not doing the full amount of work. That's betraying Jesus for money. When I say, who among us has not betrayed Jesus for money, we've all betrayed Jesus for money at some point. Glossing over crucial information ... I heard a story about an elder in a church and how the young man in the church who was looking for a used car. The elder sold the young man the used car. It was completely rusted out underneath, but he didn't disclose that information. Betraying Jesus for money.

We've all done it, but here is the big idea. Everyone does it, **everyone betrays Jesus for money, but it's what we do next that counts.** It's what we do next that counts. Do we do what Judas did, or do we do what Peter did? Peter was not betraying Jesus for money. It should not go unnoticed that the gospel writers, under the inspiration of the holy spirit, chose to put the story of Peter's denial and the story of the betrayal by Judas side by side. He was filled with remorse, we know that that's what happened.

The Difference Between Remorse & Repentance

What is the difference between remorse and repentance? He was seized with remorse, he returned the money, restitution, and then he said "I have sinned, this was an innocent man." Remorse. Is that enough? Is that enough? I have felt remorse recently. Last week my wife and I went camping. We were driving down the road. I drove the camper up because I was afraid to have her in the camper after the

trailer hitch had fallen off two times, so I had her fly up and then I went over and picked her up at the airport.

After I picked her up at the airport I was driving my wife back to our camp site. There was this four-lane highway, wider than any roadway in our area here, for sure. It was 11:42 pm because the plane was late, and there were no cars anywhere. This was a road, if you go 70 and you ought to be able to go 95 on this road. It was that wide open and there were no cars there so I wasn't paying any attention to how fast I was going. The next thing I know, blue lights, but I wasn't going that fast, I just wasn't paying any attention. What I missed was that on this wide open highway, the speed limit was 45. The policeman pulls me over, Roy. He said, "Sir, do you know how fast you were going?" I said "I have no idea, but what's the problem?" He said, "Well, I clocked you going 62 and a 45," and I'm thinking "Big deal, I have no remorse about this whatsoever," but I tried to pretend that I felt remorse. Roy was so cool about it. In fact he even referred to his town as their town. He was embarrassed to stop me for doing that. He knew what was going on and so we had a nice chat and he let me go. There was another book over here, so I say 'hey' and I gave him a copy of *The Man in the Mirror*. I'm up to 16 books so far on this odyssey. There is a difference between remorse and repentance. You can actually feel true moral guilt. You can feel true moral guilt and not be repentant. This word here remorse is related to the word metanoia which is the word for repentance, but it's a different word. This word here, remorse is a change in how you feel. Repentance is a change of heart. This is a change in feeling versus repentance which is a change of heart, and that's the difference here, that's what's going on.

What was Judas sorry for? He was sorry because he had betrayed the blood of an innocent man, but he didn't change his mind. Instead in pride and self-sufficiency and rebellion, instead of turning to Jesus, this story could have had a different ending. This story could have had a different ending. I'm not aware at least of anything in the prophecy about what was going to happen that said that Judas couldn't have come back and repented later. I'm not really aware of anything. This story could have had a different ending. It's what you do next that counts, Judas. Instead he clung to that pride of life and he went out and he hanged himself. Everyone betrays Jesus for money. It's what we do next that counts.

What can you do TODAY if you're tempted to betray Jesus for money?

Finally today, what can you do today if you've been tempted to betray Jesus for money? What can you do? I have already asked the question, did the story of Judas have to end like it did? The answer, of course, is no, the story of Judas did not have to end like it did. How could it have been different? He could have done what Peter did. So far we've only seen that in the denial of Jesus three times by Peter we've only seen so far that he wept bitterly. David, did he go forward and talk about the restitution of Peter?

We'll talk about the restoration of Peter because of his deep, not only remorse, but also repentance. In other words he did something differently than Judas. The question is what can you do if you swallow the bait? What can you do if you see the bait dangling right in front of you right now like a little fishy, you see the little worm and you just so want to go out and bite on that worm as hard as you can not knowing that the fisherman is showing you the bait but hiding the hook. The fisherman in this case is the devil himself. In fishing you show people the bait but you hide the hook.

What if you've already swallowed the bait or you're tempted to swallow the bait? Right now you're thinking about betraying Jesus for money, or you already have betrayed Jesus for money. What if you have just now maybe started to turn left? You've been going right, but for whatever reason, you have

started to go to the left. Maybe you haven't done anything wrong yet. Maybe you can turn left four or five times. Maybe you're way left. Maybe that's why you're here because you want to know how to get back. You feel remorse. You know that you have true moral guilt just like Judas did. You have said openly, "I have sinned." What is still missing? Why can't you get it right? Why can't you get back to where you want to be or where you know you want to be?

The answer is repentance. It's not just a change in how you feel about what has happened, it's a change of heart. It's saying "I realize that I can no longer be in-charge of my life. I need to surrender my life to the lordship of Jesus Christ." That's the deal. That's what you need to do next. It's easy to go back to the left in his whole camper thing. Every time I see a little something, a little problem, I would then go buy something. One thing was, I apparently am very susceptible to insect bites so I started buying appropriate insect repellents and anti-itch things. Every time something happens I go on Amazon. The awning on the camper was starting to ... It looked like the wind was going to rip it off. I went and did some research, I found that you can buy some straps for \$20 or something like that that you screw into the ground and you hook to the awning, that keeps it from flapping.

There were about 50 things like that, so for about a month and a half I'm on Amazon every day buying something. I'm a materialist, I'm a recovering materialist, but I am a double recovering materialist, but I am. I have that in me. Unfortunately for me it's adultery, it's not abandoning Jesus. I'm just trying to have my cake and eat it too. Anyway, there I am, I'm buying something every day every day, and now all of a sudden I have everything I need, but I want to buy something anyway because it's coming back, it's coming back. What do I need to do? Feel bad about it? Have a change of feeling, feel remorse? I know I've sinned. Yeah, okay. I haven't quite done that yet. Anyway the point is, just to go back to repentance and surrender. Men, as we close, where are you on all of this? The big ideas, it doesn't ... Everybody does it, everybody betrays Jesus for money, but it's what we do next that counts. It's what we do next that counts.

As we close, what I'd like to do is I'd like to lead us in a community prayer. You pray silently to yourself after me if you want to. If you don't want to, name your child Judas, I don't care. Anyway, it's a prayer of repentance and surrender, and in this whole area of betraying Jesus for money. I'm sure that even if you don't need it for today, at least log this in the back of your mind so that if in the future when and if you should betray Jesus for money, you can come back to this line of reasoning. Let us pray!

Closing Prayer

"Our dearest Father, we come to you humbly. We bow our heads and assume this posture of humility before you shunning the pride of life that has caused us to betray you Jesus for money, or to think about betraying you, Jesus, for money. Lord, we do feel remorse for what we've done in the past or are doing now. But Lord, we don't want to just feel differently, we actually want to change our hearts, and we know that we can do that. It's only the gospel of Jesus that can change our hearts. We come now Lord, and each of us in our own way, we pray this. Father, I have sinned. I do feel remorse. I have betrayed an innocent man, but more than that I am truly sorry and I repent. I want to be a different man. I don't want to just be the same man who feels sorrow, I want to be a different man.

I know that that happens by putting my complete faith in Jesus. By faith right now I repent and I make a full total complete surrender of my life to you Jesus and to your lordship over my life. Thank you for forgiving this sin in me and for accepting my repentance, putting your faith in me and receiving it back. Now I pray that you would show me, what do I need to do with the 30 pieces of silver that I have taken

inappropriately. Thank you for coming to me in this way this morning, Jesus. I pray this prayer in your loving name. Amen!"