*The Problem of Judas*

***Jn. 13:21-35***

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*The case of Judas has puzzled Christians for centuries. When one tries to sort out the relationship between his actions, God’s sovereignty and Satanic influence, there seem to be more questions than answers about his place in the plan on the Father with His Son.*

*Having said the above, we can be thankful that our Lord did not leave out the record of Judas from the gospel accounts, for as puzzling as the person of Judas was in the day of Christ, we are also confused as to what to say about where some people stand with Jesus and their actions which seem to stand in such stark contrast to how they have behaved among God’s people as long as we have known them. The question is sometimes asked, “I know a person who just walked away from his relationship with Christ; were they a Christian in the first place?” It’s hard to make a final call. We are reminded of John’s word, written toward the end of his long life with the Lord and at a time when the church was facing much by way of heresy:*

**“Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. 19They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us. 20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.” 1Jn. 2:18-20**

***In vs. 2 the devil prompted Judas by placing a thought in his mind.******Satan cannot read man’s mind, but he can impart thoughts to man’s mind. In this sense, he lives with the limitations of man: a man cannot read our mind, but he can suggest things to our minds.*** *There was a Satanic motivation in his heart. It was presented as a possibility to Judas and he harbored this. It’s my conviction that Judas didn’t have a problem with Jesus, as being antagonistic to Him;* ***Judas did have a problem with money.******(Mat. 26:14-16; Jn. 12:3-6).*** *It was his dishonesty that gave the devil a foothold in his life.* ***(Eph. 4:27)******This act of friendship was offered to Judas because he was sitting very close to Jesus at the table. This was a rebuke by Christ, this act found Judas out in a way that the others did not comprehend. But Judas did and this offended him.***

***You don’t give the money to a dishonest man!*** *I’m sure that the disciples had given Judas their initial trust because he in some measure deserved it. They never suspected Judas. In* ***vs. 22,28,29*** *we see that the disciples had no clue as to the identity of the one who would betray Christ.* ***In fact, in the other gospel accounts when Jesus began to say plainly that one of them would betray Him, they began to discuss with each other as to who would do it.*** *Judas was even entrusted with the money in the group!* ***Title, task and trust by others do not ensure that someone is authentic!***

***Judas was ready to accept the church, but not Christ. He accepted Christians, Christians accepted him; but he rejected Christ. He accepted Christ’s gift of bread, but not the invitation to repent.***

***In Mat. 26, Judas is even recorded as saying to Jesus, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” (vs. 25) It should be noted that Judas called Jesus Rabbi, but never Lord.***

*Although having their trust and holding the money, he took advantage of it secretly. It was this secret that opened the door for the devil to take advantage of it.* ***Be sure of this, we never are given over to demonic power randomly. For Jesus is able to keep from his influence.******(1Jn. 5:18; Jude 24)*** *Rather, we are open to Satanic influence by our sin.* ***(Eph. 4:27)*** *We have a responsibility! Job and Peter (and the disciples) were exposed to Satanic influence by the permission of God who in the end turned the events into blessing for His own glory.* ***In both the case of Job and Peter, Satan had to be given permission to do what he did.***

*In* **vs. 27** *the scripture says that,* ***“Satan entered into him.”*** *What that actually means is up to debate.* ***We do know that this was pre-Pentecost, hence the spirit of Judas was not filled with the Holy Spirit. I hold to the conviction that a person’s spirit cannot be occupied by the Holy Spirit and an evil spirit at the same time. Although a Christian may not be demon possessed, he can be demon oppressed.***

***As someone has said, “I don’t know if Christians can have demons, but demons can have Christians.” Jesus said of Judas, “one of you is a devil” (Jn. 6:70); He calls him “the son of perdition” (Jn. 17:12). The word “perdition” means, “doomed to destruction”(NIV) or “destined to be lost” (Amp.) It is referring to eternal death as in Rev. 20:11-15***

***The devil left Christ in Lk. 4:13 “until an opportune time”. Now he returns in Judas. Satan has also returned in Mat. 16 and also the many times in the life of Christ when people tried to kill Jesus before the Passover, in the year that He died.***

*It appears that Satan capitalized on Judas’ willingness to entertain his suggestion in* ***vs. 2.******I believe that Judas was more interested in making money than betraying Jesus. (Jn. 12:4-6; Mat. 26:14-16)*** *I am also sure that he never believed that his betrayal, and his accepting a bribery to do so, would lead to the death of Jesus. This seems to be indicated by his actions of remorse in* ***Mat. 27:3-5.******Our decisions have far greater outworkings than we could ever imagine.***

***30 pieces of silver was the normal price for a slave on the market at that time! After this he goes to the religious leaders who in turn go to Pilate to get the cohort of Roman soldiers. Rome had taken away the right to exercise capital punishment in 30 AD. Judas had to go with the soldiers as a witness. Jesus took the place of the slave, not servant, at this dinner. A slave in that day had no personal rights, he was a piece of property, no more. He could be killed without incurring guilt under some circumstances.***

***The Key To Judas:******He may have expressed remorse to the leaders, but he never went to Jesus with that remorse, and hence remained un-forgiven.******It is possible to feel sorry for your sin without repenting from your sin. What if he had gone to Jesus and confessed his sin? It should be noted as well that Judas did not take part in the Passover to it’s completion here, that is a comment on his life.***

***See Mat. 13:24-30.*** *Note in* ***vs. 28-30*** *that Jesus teaches that we are not to try and separate them this side of eternity. That is something He will do. And He exemplified this in His treatment of Judas.* ***See 1Jn. 2:18-20*** *There will be some who look like the real deal, but they will not remain with us. Don’t try to hold on to everyone; the HS will give you insight into which ones should go* ***(1Jn. 2:20).*** *John was at this supper with Judas and spoke from being an eyewitness.*

***In conclusion, I would say the following regarding Judas:***

*Judas never “received” Christ, although he spent a lot of time around Christ. He had cultivated a life-style in darkness which caused him to be afraid of the light.* ***(Jn. 12:4-6)*** *A person can be around religious people, involved in religious activity, and that all the time hiding what they are doing in the dark.*

*His offer to do a seemly “good work”, was in reality a dead work, because it would have been done apart from Christ.* ***(Jn. 12:4-6)*** *Judas was like Cain, a man in front of whom sin was crouching at the door. It wanted to master Judas as it had mastered Cain.*

*Would Jesus have been crucified without being betrayed by Judas? Yes.* ***(Acts 2:22-23)*** *Hence, the betrayal was not necessary to God’s plans!*

*The disciples would have been shocked at the intent of Judas’ heart at this moment; Jesus knew what they did not.* ***(13:28-29)*** *They had long since given Judas their trust!* ***(12:4-6)*** *Jesus never entrusts Himself to men like they did.* ***(Jn. 2:23-25)*** *Hence when Jesus speaks to people, He does with an intimate knowledge of their secret motives, and not just their outward actions. For this reason there are things happening in people that we will not understand; Jesus does for He sees what no man does.*

*All Judas would have had to do was accept the Person behind the morsel; accept the Savior behind the offer. The offer of the morsel was the offer of Christ’s loyalty, honor and friendship. It is an incredible sign for what any repentant person can expect when he turns from his intended evil: a Savior and Friend. If we turn to Christ in repentance instead of running from Christ in rebellion, you will meet a loving friend of sinners. You’ll be welcomed when you think you’ll be condemned and the strength of that loving welcome will drive the evil intent from your heart. It is the sheer kindness of God which leads a man to repentance.* ***(Rom. 2:4)***

*Christ offers “last-minute” love! Don’t miss it when you can accept it at the last minute. This is proven by the thief on the cross. All that was needed on the part of Judas was the honest admission, “Yes, I’m about to betray you Jesus. That is the intent of my heart. It’s about to master me, it’s so close. Forgive me and save me from my intent.” A man discovers Jesus in the light, never in this kind of darkness.* ***(1Jn. 1:7-9)***

*Christ offered him a dipped piece of bread in Jn.* ***13:26*** *and called him friend in* ***Mat. 26:50****. Truly, Christ loved to the end and Judas’ intent did not divert the love of Christ from him; for Christ lived His life solely in the will of His Father and was free from this man.*

*This was in accordance with the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God.* ***(Acts 2:22-23)*** *Even in the worst of cases, God is still on the throne and has not written the last chapter. The devil led Judas into the night* ***(Jn. 13:31);*** *but it was God who overruled in this and brought glory to Christ* ***(Jn. 13:30)***

***Judas will not be in heaven for the following reasons:***

* ***Mat. 26:24.*** *Surely this one will not spend eternity with God.*
* ***Jn. 6:70.*** *Jesus does not mention him as a redeemed disciple, but a devil.*
* ***Jn. 13:10-11.*** *Jesus sets Judas apart from the others who were “clean”.*
* ***Jn. 17:12****. Jesus singles him out for “perdition”.*
* ***Acts 1:25.*** *“Where he belongs” cannot mean anything else but hell.*

*Would the Jews have crucified Christ without the help of Judas? Most assuredly, yes. For this was the pre-determined plan of God.*

***Could Judas have repented? Yes. (In Acts 1:25 it says that he “turned aside”) The prophesy fits the event, not the event to the prophesy. Furthermore, the act of dipping the bread (or meat) was a sign of friendship that Jesus offered Judas. It was an opportunity to repent.***

***John does not make the trouble to mention the fact that Judas returned the money. He may have showed remorse at that time, but John had a settled conclusion as to the person of Judas when he wrote this last gospel account. His tears and suicide were rooted in self-pity, not repentance.***

*Above all this, God was still on the throne and His will was done. He foresees all, and overrules the schemes of Satan.* ***What we also see is that Satan is not endowed with supernatural insight and God is smarter than he is. The failure of Judas should give us confidence in the sovereignty of God on our behalf allowing us to know that even in the worst of cases, Jesus will win!*****See 1Cor. 2:6-9 *God’s wisdom is far above that of the forces of evil in this world and we can have tremendous confidence in that. See Acts 4:27-28***

***In the worst of times we can take comfort and draw confidence from these events. God had not let something slip out of His control. This also shows that Jesus was never deceived. (Jn. 6:64; 6:71; 12:4; 13:11; 13:21) It also gives us much comfort that Jesus will never treat us in the way that Judas ended his life. (Jn. 17:12)***

*Please do not circulate these notes in any public form. These are rough notes on this subject from Peter Reid’s lecture series on John and do not represent his final conclusions on this subject. Again, they are an attempt to formulate his thoughts on Judas in an informal way at this time. Thank you. 24.1.16*