

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN**Betrayal
and Love****INTRODUCTION**

John 13:21-38

John sets this account against the background of the distress of Jesus. He said that when Jesus had spoken after the footwashing, and had recognized what Judas was, he was "troubled in spirit." The Greek word means that he was "deeply agitated," he was grieved, hurt. Going to the cross was not an easy thing for Jesus to do. If we think of him as being unmoved through this whole circumstance, of speaking with poise and an untroubled spirit, we are wrong, because Jesus was deeply disturbed at this point. It grieved him that he would face this perfidy and treachery in Judas. He had just quoted from the 41st Psalm the verse in which David had said, "He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me," (Psalms 41:9b RSV). In the mind of Jesus this was what Judas was about to do. The phrase, "he has lifted his heel against me" is a word-picture of a companion who, without warning, for no reason, suddenly turns around, lifts his heel, and kicks you in the face. You can imagine how stunning that would be. Thus Jesus is greatly troubled as he anticipates this action of Judas, and he feels it with full force as an act of callous betrayal by one whom he had loved and trusted.

Now, Jesus knew that it was coming. This is made clear in many accounts. As far back as the sixth chapter of John we are told that Jesus said, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70). He had known all along that one of his own disciples would betray him, because the Scriptures had said so. And he knew which one it was, yet nevertheless at this point, when Judas is actually on the verge of doing this, it hits with tremendous impact upon Jesus' heart, and he is grieved and hurt and distressed and troubled.¹

OPEN IT

1. **Have you ever experienced betrayal or unfaithfulness from a friend or loved one? How did that affect you? (Please share honestly, but don't give place to gossip or slander. Consider sharing the story but not using names.)**

¹ <https://www.raystedman.org/thematic-studies/upper-room/judas-and-peter>

READ IT

John 13:21-38

EXPLORE IT

2. Why was Jesus “troubled in His spirit”?
3. Who wanted to know who would betray Jesus?
4. Who asked Jesus which disciple would betray Him?
5. What did Judas do after he was identified?
6. What was the new commandment that Jesus gave to His disciples?
7. Peter pledges to lay down his life for Jesus, but what did Jesus predict Peter would do?

APPLY IT

I'm not a country music fan, but sometimes when I'm driving for long distances, it's the only thing on the radio, so I'll listen for a short time. Invariably, you'll hear a song around the theme, "I loved her but she didn't love me; now I'm as sad as I can be." We may chuckle at the songs, but if it's ever happened to you, you know that it's really painful to love someone but not to have your love returned; or, even worse, for the one you love to deliberately hurt you.

That's true not only for romantic relationships, but also for friends of the same sex. If you've ever had a trusted friend turn on you and attack you, it hurts! It's surely one of life's most emotionally painful experiences.

To relate to that emotional pain is to understand, in part, why Jesus became troubled in spirit as He thought about Judas in the Upper Room on the night of the betrayal (John 13:21). There were other things, besides Judas' calloused heart, which troubled Jesus that evening. But Jesus was troubled not only with the personal pain of Judas' betrayal, but also because He knew that Judas was leaving the Light of the world and stepping into the darkness of hell. When John states (John 13:30), "and it was night," he means more than the fact that it was dark outside. It is always night when a person rejects God's love and goes into the darkness of eternity without God. It was especially "night" when the "son of perdition" betrayed the spotless Son of God into the hands of evil men.²

- 8. There has been much speculation about Judas for the last 2,000 years. What's your opinion of him? Look at these passages (and our text this week) and give your assessment of the man, Judas.**

Matthew 26:14-16; 27:2-6; John 17:11,12

- 9. Judas betrayed his friend Jesus - he led the authorities to Him. Jesus predicted that Peter would deny Him - meaning that he would deny that he even knew Jesus. Number 1 - Are these sins? And Number 2 - Are they different?**

² <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-73-light-night-john-1321-30>

10. When have you been unfaithful to Jesus, even in a way that was surprising to you? How did you feel? How did you respond? Share this experience with your group.

11. What do you think is the significance of Jesus speaking of loving one another just after He was not shown love?

12. Jesus says to love one another in the same way that He loved the disciples! What are the ways that Jesus has shown love to His disciples?

13. What are some of the ways that you have fulfilled Jesus' commandment in this last month?

14. As a group, discuss how you can together obey this commandment of our Lord in practical ways?

****CHALLENGE****

Come up with some concrete ways your group can collectively love someone/a family in this next week!