

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-32 Satan and Judas

Perhaps you have heard someone say that who you ARE is much more important than what you DO. We have all known people whom we find are not what they appear to be on the outside. A person may even do Christian things, but not have a changed heart that puts God first.

Our last lesson discussed how Jesus delegated power to His 12 disciples and then to 72 more disciples, who were sent out into the villages to preach the gospel, heal the sick, and cast out demonic fallen angels. When the 72 returned to Jesus they rejoiced that even the demons had obeyed them. But Jesus mildly rebuked them and told them not to be proud of demons obeying them, rather to rejoice that their names are written in the Book of Life. God's plan from before the beginning was to have children to love. The highest and greatest statement that any person can make is that they are a child of God. The things that they do, whether miracles or casting out demons, are merely the result of being a child of God.

Jesus also made a remarkable statement to these 72 disciples. He said that He watched as Satan fell from the sky like a bolt of lightning. He had tempted Jesus in the wilderness without success. The Bible says that Satan then departed from Jesus until a more opportune time. Well, the time had come. Jesus was becoming a major problem to Satan and his earthly empire. Satan had heard reports of Jesus giving power and authority to His 12 disciples. Now He had given it to 72 more disciples. Satan had to do something. His fallen angels were under attack, not only by Jesus, but now by His disciples. So Satan himself came down to the earth to deal with Jesus once and for all.

After being baptized and tempted, Jesus went up out of the wilderness into Galilee to begin His ministry. Some of the disciples of John the Baptist followed Jesus. Soon Jesus attracted many other followers who became disciples. One day Jesus went up onto a mountain to pray and to spend time with God. When He came down the next day He called all of His disciples together and from them He selected 12 who would become His apostles. Among these 12 was a man named Judas Iscariot.

Very little is known about Judas. We must assume that Judas was a follower of Jesus just like Peter and John. He was accepted by the other disciples as a good man, so much so, that he was entrusted to be their treasurer. He was in charge of the money bag from which all of the ministry expenses were paid. Judas traveled with Jesus for almost three years and experienced all of the mighty miracles that Jesus performed. He was there when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. He heard all of Jesus' teaching. But Judas had a major weakness. He loved money more than he loved God. This weakness would become his downfall.

It was just six days before Passover and Jesus knew that He would soon be betrayed and then would die. He and His disciples were invited to dinner at Lazarus' home. During this time people would eat meals by reclining on large flat benches covered with cushions and pillows. They would lay across the benches with their feet dangling off of the ends or off of the back.

Before them were small tables upon which food was placed by servants. Jesus, His 12 disciples, and Lazarus were thus positioned to enjoy a feast.

Now Lazarus had two sisters. Martha was the elder and was one of those people who was always working to make sure everyone was taken care of. She expressed her gratitude towards Jesus for raising her brother from the dead by doing her very best to serve Jesus and His disciples a wonderful meal. Her sister Mary was different. While Martha loved to work, Mary loved to be with people. While Martha busied herself in serving the meal, Mary decided to show her appreciation and love for Jesus in a different way. While all of the men were enjoying their meal, Mary entered the room carrying a half liter jar of expensive perfume. The men were all facing the dining table with their feet hanging off the benches behind them and thus did not notice as Mary knelt at Jesus' feet. She opened the jar and poured the expensive perfume over Jesus' feet, then used her long hair to wipe the excess from His feet. Soon the entire room was filled with the fragrance and all of the disciples turned to see where the fragrance was coming from. Immediately the conversation changed and some of the disciples began to talk about what Mary had just done.

“Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor?” Judas said. “This perfume was worth a year's wages.” Perhaps some disciples nodded in agreement. But Jesus knew Judas' real motivation. Judas had been struggling with his weakness, but had lost the battle. He had become a thief, stealing money from the disciples' money bag. Judas was frustrated that the perfume had been wasted on Jesus. If she wanted to give a gift to the ministry, the perfume should have been sold for a huge sum of money—money that he could easily have stolen part of and which no one would ever have known. The Bible says that man looks on outward appearances, but that God looks at the heart. And Jesus knew that Judas' heart had turned very very dark.

“Leave her alone,” Jesus rebuked. “It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me” (John 12:1-8).

Perhaps it was this public rebuke and embarrassment that pushed Judas over edge. No one can know for sure what Judas was thinking, but we do know that Judas' heart had become so dark that he opened his spirit to evil. Satan watched all of these events with anticipation. We read in the Bible what happened next. Satan himself entered into Judas. Together they went to the Jewish priests who had been looking for a way to arrest Jesus privately. “What will you pay me to deliver Jesus into your hands?” Judas asked the priests. They agreed to pay Judas in silver if he would betray Jesus in such a way that the public did not see the arrest, for they feared the people would become a mob. And so Judas, possessed by Satan, waited for an opportunity to hand Him over (Luke 22:3-6).

This lesson is **important** because it shows what happened to Judas when he failed to fully surrender to the lordship of Jesus. He allowed the love of money to overcome his love for God.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that when a life is not surrendered to Christ, Satan may take control of that life with disastrous results.

Let's **review** what you learned in this lesson.

1. Who kept the money bag for Jesus and His disciples? [Pause 5 seconds]
 - A. If you said, "Judas Iscariot kept the money bag," you are correct.

2. What was Judas Iscariot's weakness? [Pause]
 - A. If you said that Judas loved money more than God, then you answered correctly.

3. Who entered into Judas and possessed him? [Pause]
 - A. If you said, "Satan entered into Judas," then you are right.

Your **assignment** is to watch this lesson at least three times or until you can tell the story correctly. Find someone and teach them the difference between knowing about God and really putting Him first in their heart. Ask the person to allow you to pray with them if they have not received Jesus as Savior.