

God With Us
“Judas’ Purpose”
Matthew 26:14-25

“When it was evening, He reclined at the table with the twelve. And as they were eating, He said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” (Matthew 26:20)

I. Treachery at the Lord’s Table

- a. Why did Jesus use this setting to identify the treachery of Judas? Why didn’t he call him out?
- b. Judas turned against Jesus, because Satan found a willing tool. Satan put the ideas into Judas’ mind (John 13:2) and used (possessed) him to betray Jesus.
 1. Verse 16 speaks to the persistent zeal (evil enthusiasm) of Judas.
- c. Judas is not unique. Satan still uses people to undermine the Lord’s plans, even those who present themselves as being part of the “inner circle.”
- d. We should read this text as a warning to ourselves.
- e. At this celebration meal, Jesus made an unsettling declaration, *One of you will betray me*. These words flowed from Jesus’ mouth like the words that calmed the sea.
 1. Jesus did not name the traitor, but He revealed that He was aware of the plot.

II. The Disciples’ Question at the Table

- a. Each disciple asked this question, “Is it I Lord?”
- b. As believers, we should hear this text as a call for self-examination before Communion.
- c. The Apostle Paul (1 Cor 11:27-32) calls each person to examine (*dokimazeto*-document) themselves before eating “the bread and drinking the up.”
- d. “Discerning the body” also involves *group-examination*, meaning we come to the table as family joined by the blood of Jesus.
- e. If we have ill feelings or unforgiveness in our hearts we cannot truly celebrate Christ’s sacrifice.
- f. We never come to the table with a “Y’all come and eat!” attitude, without reflection and preparation.
- g. The table and the invitation to the table are holy. Only the holy are invited and only the holy can truly understand why the table and the invitation were given in the first place.
- h. The early church would declare this before communion: *If anyone be not a disciple, let them withdraw, the table receives not such*.
 1. To the elders and pastors: *There is no small punishment for you, if being conscious of wickedness in anyone, you allow them to partake at this table. His blood shall be required at your hands*.
- i. Every believer should review their lives on the evening and morning before Communion, and during the service, by asking the question, “Is it I Lord?”

III. Lessons to Be Learned

- a. It should not be, but treachery still occurs at the Lord’s table.
- b. While at the table, on two occasions, Judas could have repented (vv.21 and 23).
- c. Holy Communion is supposed to be a celebration that begins with repentance.
- d. The Communion table has reservation only for the repentant. (Body/Bread-Wine/Blood)
- e. Holy Communion is not a religious experience but a relational experience. It is both personal and congregational.
 1. I thank Him for saving me (personal).
 2. I thank Him for saving you (congregational).