

=THE APOSTLES=

Lesson 6

Judas Iscariot

AIM: to teach my pupils the lessons derived from the life of Judas Iscariot.

POINT OF CONTACT: Start the lesson off with asking the pupils questions about the past apostles. In other words, give some statements about an apostle and have them give the name. Suggestions are as follows: Who was the doubter? Who was the tax collector? Who was the beloved disciple? Who was the one who brought the lad with the loaves and fishes? In other words, look back over the prior lessons and have the pupils guess which apostle goes with the fact that you present. You might mix it up and keep coming back to the same apostle more than once.

- I. THE NAME "ISCARIOT" AS CONNECTED WITH JUDAS WAS PROBABLY GIVEN HIM FOR TWO REASONS: First, there was another Judas among the Twelve. They probably just added this simply to designate him from the other one. Second, the name "Iscariot" probably means that he came from Kerioth, which means that he probably was not from Galilee.
- II. HE WAS AN APOSTLE AND YET HE WAS NOT SAVED. No doubt it became increasingly difficult for him to admit his lost condition. More and more he gained stature and leadership, and more and more it would have cost him to have admitted that he was unsaved. The time to admit one is unsaved, even though he is a church member, is immediately. Later, there will come more confidence from the people in one's "Christianity." Then there come obligations, opportunities, leadership privileges, etc. Each makes it harder for the person to admit his condition. (Teacher, remind the class members that now is the time to admit if one is really not saved. With the passing of the days and with the increasing of the opportunities and the responsibilities, it becomes harder to face the issue.)
- III. JUDAS WAS THE APOSTLE WHO "KEPT THE BAG." In other words, he was the treasurer of the apostles. This is not hard to figure out. His character shows us he probably followed Jesus because he expected to derive some monetary advantage. No doubt he thought that Christ was going to establish His kingdom and that he would have some earthly advantage from this kingdom. The fact that he was the treasurer and still not saved means that he was a trusted man. It also means that being a church member does not save; neither does being a church official save; neither does being on the board save; neither does being a preacher save. This man had all these positions, yet was not saved.
- IV. THOUGH HE TRIED TO COVER IT, HIS TRUE CHARACTER CAME OUT. When Mary of Bethany in her affection for Jesus broke the alabaster box of ointment and anointed Him, Judas denounced her because he considered her to be extravagant. Of course, this is not because he cared for the poor but that he wished the money to be placed in the treasury so he could help himself to it as he had often done before. Notice John 12:5, 6. Judas had personality but not character. It is important that a person have good character; the real character of a person will come out in the end. It can be hidden only so long. The real Judas is now coming out. That is why we ought to try to develop character rather than personality. We normally think that a person is qualified to do God's work because he has talent and personality. Nothing could be further from the truth. Character is 10,000 times more important than personality and talent! (Teacher, stress this to the children! It is important that these character traits be developed while they are young.)
- V. JUDAS BETRAYED HIS LORD WITH A KISS. After the story mentioned in the above paragraph, Jesus mildly reproved Judas. Perhaps this rebuke aroused his resentment, and he went to the chief priests and offered to betray Jesus unto them for a price. They agreed with him on thirty pieces of silver, or about \$19.50 (the ordinary price of a slave). Notice the price for which he sold the Lord. Compare this to the prices for which people sell their salvation or their souls today--maybe a bottle of beer, maybe a job, maybe popularity. All of these are foolish prices to receive for a lost soul.

At the Passover supper, Jesus, in order to carry out His design of being crucified, pointed out the traitor. The Devil had already put it in the heart of Judas to betray Jesus then. (John 13:2) When Jesus said, "One of you shall betray me," each disciple asked, "Lord, is it I?" Peter beckoned to John to ask Christ who it was. Jesus replied that it was one of those that was dipping with Him in the dish (Matthew 26:23; Mark 14:20), and the one to whom He would give the sop (John 13:26). It was, in other words, His own friend who ate bread with Him. Jesus and Judas no doubt were dipping together in the same dish. Jesus dipped the sop that He held in His hand and gave it to Judas, and immediately Satan entered into him (John 13:27). (Teacher, pause here and ask the class if there are any unsaved. Do not ask for a show of hands, unless heads are bowed, but simply suggest that if there are any unsaved present, the price that is keeping them from Christ is certainly not worthwhile.)

- VI. JUDAS HAD REMORSE. The next morning when Judas, now in a calmer mood, saw that Jesus was condemned and about to be put to death, he realized how big his guilt was. He went to the chief priest and confessed: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." Notice those words in Matthew 27:4, "...I have betrayed the innocent blood..." He was realizing that Jesus' blood was the only innocent blood. He even offered to return the money. What remorse! Sin always brings remorse, but not necessarily at first. The money felt good in his hands at first; but the longer he thought on it, the longer he had to be remorseful. Remorse always comes when one has sinned. (Please stress this to the class again and again and again. One may not feel guilty for his sin right away, but in due time he will.)
- VII. JUDAS HAD TO PAY FOR HIS SIN. See Matthew 27:3-5. He hanged himself. "...and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out," Acts 1:18. Sin must be paid for, not only with remorse but with punishment and death and heartache. (Spend a few moments reminding the class of the seriousness of sin. It may start out good, but it is followed by remorse and later on by payment.)

CONCLUSION: As a postscript to the lesson, we should remind the pupils that the one big thing that Judas did wrong besides not being saved was misevaluating the importance of money. Money meant too much to him. Suggest these things about money to the class:

1. Teach the importance of tithing. Teach them that when a person does not tithe, it is a sign of money meaning too much. Explain what tithing means and how we ought to tithe.
2. Stress the importance of paying debts on time. This will help build character in the lives of the young people, and in these days, they certainly need it.