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Lessons from the Betrayer; Matt 27:1-10

GPBC

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Introduction – A few weeks ago we observed how Peter the disciple became Peter the denier. It all started with little steps in the wrong direction and creating a little distance between him and Jesus. Negative spiritual trajectories have damaging consequences. The takeaways for us are to keep close to Christ and count the cost of being a disciple because being a denier is in the end a higher price.

Today we're observing Judas the betrayer. Peter was a true follower who followed the wrong path, faced the consequences of his sin, and through repentance, faith, and grace is eventually restored and reconciled to Christ. Judas is another story. He was the wolf, dressed as a sheep, mingling with the sheep. But as with all false professors and disciple pretenders, your true colors eventually show. For Peter it was a slow, hard road back from denial. For Judas, there was no road back. He had never truly been with Jesus to begin with.

Our text today is a very large, bright red, stop sign right in the path of our lives. The life and death of Judas scream at us to stop and consider our ways, consider the outcome of the direction of our lives, and if need be, by all means, change course now before it is everlasting too late.

- I. It's Just Not Worth It (vv3-4)
 - a. What I mean by "it's just not worth it" is this: If Christ is not the supreme treasure of your life, then whatever is, is just not worth it.
 - b. For Judas, it was 30 pieces of silver. The price to purchase a slave. That's the value he placed upon Christ. You see whatever we put in place of Christ in our hearts, not only reveals what we truly worship but also what we think of Christ. Judas worshipped money and prestige, and in doing so, thought very little of the worth of Christ.
 - i. What do we treasure most in our hearts? Is it popularity? Is it to be trendy and in sync with the times? Is it the applause and approval of our peers? To be known, to be wealthy, to pursue our own ambitions and pleasures, to live our life as we please? Is it to be successful, to live a life of luxury and ease? Is it a relationship, a spouse, our children? What is the number one

thing we are living for and can't live without? If it's not Christ, that's our God. That's what or who we worship. Whatever captures our foremost affection, sits on the throne of our hearts. And in order to obtain that affection or keep that affection, we have to pursue other things, which pushes Christ way down the ladder of our hearts. Christ is never second place, but even if He was, we are still idolators at heart.

- c. What was Judas' scheme here. Did he think that by betraying Christ he could force Christ to take over Rome, rule from Jerusalem, and Judas would naturally control the wealth of this new kingdom? Maybe. Because as soon as Jesus is condemned and his plan fails, he changed his mind. But it was too late. The deed was done. He had gone too far, loved money for too long, took a step that could not be retracted
 - d. And he knows now just how evil were his actions. He declares he has betrayed innocent blood. He knows now that it just wasn't worth it. But it's too late.
 - e. That's the danger of worshipping anything or anyone other than Christ. There will come a day when we realize just how worthless our substitute is and just how dreadful our idolatry is – to make something of creation sit in the place of our Creator and push Christ aside is the most vile, horrendous action of all.
 - f. The tragedy is it may be too late when we wake to that realization. So wake now we must! Nothing is more valuable or worthy than Christ. He is the only Son of God, full of power and glory and grace, the Ruler of the nations, the King of glory, the Savior of the world, the only means of eternal life – nothing can be more vile than to discard Him and replace Him with something that won't last and can't save.
 - g. Whatever stands between you and Christ today is just not worth it.
- II. A Life Without Christ Will Prove to be No Life At All (v5)
- a. You see what happened here? Judas betrayed Christ for 30 pieces of silver. He valued a pocket full of silver as more valuable than Christ. He was willing to betray to have a bag of silver. But in the end, the silver was not enough. In the end, the silver couldn't meet his deepest, greatest need. In the end, the silver couldn't satisfy. In the

end, he throws the silver away. What he once thought meant more than Christ now he knows means nothing at all.

- b. You see that clanging silver in his pocket could never do for him what only Christ could do for him. Oh dear friends, let us wake up to this reality now, right here, today. Whatever we hold dearer in our hearts than Christ will eventually disappoint, will eventually leave us empty, will in the end fail to meet our deepest need.
- c. Christ could forgive His sin, silver couldn't. Christ could make Judas right with God, silver couldn't. Christ could carry him to the eternal joys of God's presence in heaven, silver couldn't.
- d. If Christ is not your most treasured possession, if Christ is not the Lord and Savior of your heart, if Christ is not your God, whatever is will fail you in the end. It cannot save.
- e. This is the stark lesson from Judas: if you don't have Christ, in the end you don't have anything. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, so if you don't have Christ, you don't have life. Whatever you are living for is incapable of providing life – abundant life now and eternal life to come.
- f. So Judas, in deep, dark, despair from his life of greed is left with nothing and he ends his own life to escape the misery. Tragically, only to awaken to an eternity of the same.
- g. That's where all other gods we have we eventually leave us, empty and eternally lost. Jesus said, the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I have come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly!
- h. Don't wait another minute. Don't wait for the song of response. Let go of that idol now and come to Christ. If it's your lifestyle, let it go. If it's your possessions, let it go. If it's your plans, let them go. They promise life but can't deliver. Jesus promises you life, and He laid down His life and rose again to win it for you!

III. How Will You Be Remembered (vv6-10)

- a. Judas' legacy will forever be the one who betrayed the Christ, the Son of the living God. Even the chief priests, after they got from Judas what they wanted, wanted nothing else to do with Judas or the silver. That's what the world does. It lures us in and then forsakes us when it gets what it wants. They simply didn't care. But that plot of

ground became known as the Field of Blood, purchased with a betrayer's money.

- b. If you know any biblical history at all, you know Judas is the betrayer. Even today, when someone betrays another, he's called a Judas. That's how he will always be remembered.
- c. How will we be remembered? What will be the main point of our eulogy? He was good or he was godly? She loved her family or she loved her family to Christ? They always spoke their mind or they always spoke the gospel?
- d. Parents, how will or children remember us? Students, how do you want to be remembered? Does it have anything to do with Christ? Is there anything in our lives that points to Jesus?
- e. Take to heart the lessons from the life of Judas.

Conclusion – We don't get do-overs. If Christ is not our treasure, when we come to the end of this life, we will wish we could back and do things much different. But we don't get do-overs. The Bible says we have one life and then there's the judgment. We don't get do-overs.

But we do get the chance to repent. We can let go of whatever stands between us and Christ today, cling to Christ as our treasure and Savior, and find life, hope, and salvation in Him today.