

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **Luke 22-24**

"Intimate Betrayal"

SCRIPTURE Luke 22:47-48

OBSERVATION

Being betrayed with a kiss--to this day--would be considered graduate level deception in some cultures. To get so close to someone that you could "stab them in the back with a kiss on the cheek" would be THE supreme example of outwitting someone. Weave your way into their confidence, then when the time is right...zap!

Except in this case Jesus knew exactly what was going down. His question is not one of surprise (i.e. "I can't believe you snuck on me like that?!?!"). It is not that Jesus was duped or tricked. It is about motive. After spending three years with Jesus--how could Judas do this to him?

APPLICATION

I find myself occasionally wondering the same. "Hey Judas! How could you?! You saw Jesus' miracles. You watched him heal blind people and cure lepers and feed thousands with next to nothing. What kind of low life are you?!"

And then it hits me: "Haven't you also been the recipient of miracles? Hasn't Jesus transformed your life, taken away your guilt and shame, provided for your physical, emotional, spiritual and relational needs over and over?" The answer, of course, is YES.

And yet it is equally true that I betray my Lord too. Maybe not with a kiss on the cheek. Maybe it's through forgetting that He is Lord and I am not. Maybe I betray him by failing to love, serve, forgive, and care about others the way he does. Maybe I betray him by going through the motions rather than giving God my best out of a heart overflowing with gratitude.

Those reminders help me remember a fundamental truth: on some levels we have all betrayed him. And that is why he died--to bring forgiveness and restoration to liars, sell-outs, rationalizers, blamers, etc.

The cross followed (ch. 23). Then the empty tomb (ch. 24). For you...for me...so that we who betrayed the One who stood faithful to the end could come to know his love and grace at ever deeper levels, and so that in gratitude we could courageously reach out to others...just like us.

PRAYER

Jesus, as we read about your faithfulness in the midst of betrayal; your commitment to pay the ultimate price so that we could know and be known by you--help us to rise up in deep gratitude to express your love and mercy to people in ways that will point others to the cross. Thank you for paying a debt you did not owe for those of us who owed a debt we could never repay. Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee. *Amen.*

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