

"You had better be sure!!"

Acts 1:17

Introduction: The message today is taken from our study on Wednesday evening in the book of Acts. When I put the study together it brought great concern to me for you people. Before we get into our text for today let me set a stage for where we are going with a few verses.

Matthew 7:13-14

¹³ *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:*

¹⁴ *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Jesus gave the warning that few people will be saved. Now we know there are many people who profess to know Jesus Christ, but I am fearful that the majority of them could be wrong.

Jeremiah 17:9-10

⁹ *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

¹⁰ *I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Every person has a sinful heart and so we all have the potential of being deceived by our own hearts.

It is very possible for a man or a woman to walk close to the Lord and still not be saved. They can serve in the church, they can hold an office, they can pray, they can read their Bible and they can even preach the Gospel and still die and go to hell. Several weeks ago we looked at a man named Balaam who announced some great prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. He also had conversations with God, but he died in his sins as an unsaved man.

Numbers 24:15-17

¹⁵ *And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said:*

¹⁶ He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:

¹⁷ I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

This was a prophecy concerning Jesus Christ. Then in the New Testament we read the following Words pertaining to Balaam.

Jude 1:10-12

¹⁰ But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

¹¹ Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

¹² These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

A close look at this man's life is very alarming. But there is yet another life that is even more alarming and it is the life of Judas.

"The Experiences of Judas"

Notice Acts 1:15-17

Acts 1:17 is a very interesting and also a very alarming verse. Judas was numbered with the disciples and even had part in the ministry. If we were to search the Gospels, we would see that Judas is called "**ONE OF THE TWELVE**" seven times in the Scriptures. Let me share with you a few of the Scriptures.

Matthew 26:14

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

Matthew 26:47

⁴⁷ And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

Mark 14:10

¹⁰ And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

Mark 14:43

⁴³ And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

Not only was Judas NUMBERED with the twelve, but the Bible tells us he was also chosen to be an Apostle.

John 6:70-71

⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

⁷¹ He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

This then raises an important question, "Why did Jesus choose Judas knowing that he would never get saved?"

1. He would be used to show the accuracy of the Word of God.

This is seen in the prophecies of the Psalms concerning Judas.

Psalm 41:9

⁹ Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Psalm 69:25

²⁵ Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

Psalm 109:8

⁸ Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

2. He would be used to carry out the plan of God.

The actions of Judas would be used by God to bring about the greatest Sacrifice ever made by man. While his actions would be used by God, Judas would still be accountable for what he had done.

Matthew 26:23-24

²³ And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

²⁴ The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: **but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed!** it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

Acts 2:22-24

²² Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

²³ Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

²⁴ Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

3. He would be an example of how no one, not even Satan can stop the plan of God.

John 13:21, 26-27

²¹ When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

²⁶ Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

²⁷ And after the sop **Satan entered into him.** Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

Isaiah 14:24-27

²⁴ The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, **so shall it stand:**

²⁵ That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

²⁶ This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

²⁷ For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

Lessons from the Life of Judas

1. Service does not determine salvation.

Judas served the Lord with the other disciples, but he was never saved. Judas' service was so sincere that the other disciples never suspected he was not a true believer.

Matthew 10:1-7

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

² *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;*

³ *Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;*

⁴ *Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.*

⁵ *These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:*

⁶ *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

⁷ *And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

From these verses we see two points about Judas.

- **He performed miracles.**
- **He preached the message of the Kingdom.**

We can be sure this is true because the other Apostles never reported anything contrary.

Matthew 26:21-22

²¹ *And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.*

²² *And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?*

The other disciples trusted him as the treasure of the group.

John 12:3-6

³ Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

⁴ Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

⁵ Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, **and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.**

John 13:29

²⁹ For some of them thought, **because Judas had the bag,** that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

2. It is possible for people to get very close to the Lord and never be saved.

Remember Balaam! Let us notice the Words of Jesus in Matthew 7:21-23.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² **Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?**

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Conclusion:

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?