

AT FEET OF A TRAITOR

By Keith Greer

“Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, ‘I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.’ And they said, ‘What is that to us? You see to it!’ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.” {Matthew 27:3-5} Judas knew Jesus was innocent, but his actions were wrong. Why? Let us see what we can learn from Judas:

Men are creatures of choice. *“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?’ And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.” {Matthew 26:14-16}* Judas was a thief and greedy. He chose to betray the Lord; nobody twisted his arm. God permits us to make our own decisions, regardless of whether they are wrong and likely to hurt ourselves and others. Sadly, Judas made the wrong choices for the wrong reasons.

Sin is worse than we might think. *“But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out.” {Numbers 32:23}* Unfortunately, we sometimes reason within our minds that sin is not as bad as the Bible makes it out to be. Judas thought they would just warn Jesus, maybe beat Him, but then let Him go. Sin is a spiritual killer; it’s the reason God’s Son left His home in glory—He came to redeem us! *{Romans 6:23; Romans 5:12}* Human reasoning cannot change the spiritual disaster sin brings on unrepentant souls!

Sinners cannot escape the consequences of their actions! *“For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.” {Psalm 51:3,4}* David thought he had managed to hide his sin, but he was wrong. Jonah thought he could run away from God, but he was wrong. Saul thought he could disobey God and then do something good to right the wrong—he, too, was wrong. Sinners have to repent of and deal with the sins they commit in this life. Otherwise, they will stand unforgiven before the judgment seat. And the consequences will be eternal!

Some sins cannot be covered. *“Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later. Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.” {1 Timothy 5:24,25}* Isn’t this what Achan tried to do when he hid the things he had stolen under his tent? Joshua brought him out, and Achan paid for his sin. *{Joshua 7:21:ff}*

Sin cannot be undone. *“He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.” {Proverbs 28:13}* Judas felt remorse for having placed Jesus in the hands of the Jews so they could murder and rid themselves of Him. But Judas’ remorse could not undo his sin. One can be forgiven of any sin, but that doesn’t change what has already happened. However, when God forgives us, we can avoid the most terrible consequences of our action—eternity in hell separated from God! Not a good alternative.

Give prayerful consideration to the mistakes that Judas made, and do not follow in his mistake-laden footsteps. Judas had spent three plus years with Jesus listening to his teachings, seeing His miracles and the great multitudes that came to sit at his feet. What did he do with all that shared information he was privy to? Sadly, it was all forgotten by Judas being consumed with self! I challenge you rather to follow in Jesus' footsteps and have a much more positive outcome. {1 Peter 2:22-24} Which will you choose—the footsteps of Judas or of Christ? ***