

When Judas Refused to Put God First

April 3, 2021

AUDIO

Putting God first can be difficult. **What can we learn from Judas**, who refused to put God first?

The other disciples believed Judas was perfect. He was smart and very competent. He also believed Jesus was the promised Messiah. However, Judas wanted to follow Jesus closely to obtain a high position in His future kingdom. So, Judas began to put himself first.

Ellen White reminds us that “while he accepted the position of a minister of Christ, he did not bring himself under the divine molding. He felt that he could retain his own judgment and opinions, and he cultivated a disposition to criticize and accuse.” (The Desire of Ages, p. 717).

Looking to the other disciples, says Ellen White, he believed that “the church would never prosper with such shortsighted men as leaders. . . In his own estimation he was an honor to the cause, and as such he always represented himself.” (The Desire of Ages, p. 717). But Judas was unaware that Satan was leading him to put himself first while despising Jesus’ other servants!

As he was in charge of the money given to Jesus’ company, he started to help himself out of what was intended to provide for the poor and the necessities of the little group. After all, he thought, by the work he was doing, and by honoring the group with his presence, he would deserve it!

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Images related to text and animation.

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Interpreting Jesus' meekness and dependence on the Father as weakness, he started to doubt His origin and mission. But he made no open opposition until Jesus' reproof for his covetous disposition, after Mary anointed the Savior. "... Wounded pride and desire for revenge..." (The Desire of Ages, p. 720) led him to do what he did to Jesus.

How could Judas, even working so close to Jesus, refuse to put God first, and indulge in greed and selfishness? Ellen White says that "... this will be the experience of everyone who persists in tampering with sin..." (The Desire of Ages, p. 720).

Tithe and Promise also belong to God. Judas' self-first principle is followed every time someone uses what belongs to God according to their own discretion or for personal use.

God is inviting you and me to put His kingdom first in everything we do. Money is a blessing from God only when we allow Jesus to defeat selfishness in our hearts..

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Judas refused to put God first. The consequences were terrible for him and the people around him. God's love compels us to put His kingdom first, while Judas' example is a warning for us today. As we return our tithe and promise, we are challenged to put God first.

Text animation.