

Guided Bible Study

# The Twelve Disciples

(Week 9)

Matthew 26 v. 14-30 | 26 v. 47-50 | 27 v. 1-10

An adapted version of Life Builder Study | Douglas Connelly

# Welcome

For the purposes of our Bible Studies, we will be using Life Builder Study Series (Inter-Varsity Press). Our theme for these studies is: The Twelve Disciples. The studies were originally written by Douglas Connelly, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for home study as we seek to transition between the church building and our homes during the next several weeks.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us. If you will be doing the studies at home, it is suggested that you do the study on Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30 am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.

Hope that you enjoy it!

**Pastor Ian**

# Context

Jesus had about three years to mould a dozen fearful and faithless men into the pillars of a worldwide movement. Despite this brief window, time spent with Jesus had a transforming effect on each of them; most would be inspired and emboldened to proclaim him as the saviour against great opposition. Through these ten studies, we too can experience the deep change that only time in Jesus' presence can bring.

# Some Thoughts To Help You While You Study

**The purpose of the study is to heed God's warning about turning away from Jesus and to see the tragic consequences of such betrayal.**

Judas's name is derived from the Hebrew name Judah. His surname, Iscariot, means 'man of Kerioth' and probably points to the town of Kerioth Hezron in Judea as Judas's home town.

If that identification is correct, Judas was the only one of the apostles who did not come from Galilee in the North. Judas must have been trusted and well – liked in the group since he carried the money that paid for the disciples' food and expenses. The only thing we know about Judas's family is that his father's name was Simon (**John 6 v. 71**).

Judas's call to follow Jesus is not recorded anywhere in Scripture, but he followed Jesus willingly. Like most Jews of the day, Judas was looking for the Messiah, and he believed Jesus was the promised One.

Judas had given his life to follow Jesus, but he never gave Jesus his heart. Instead he sought out Jesus' enemies with one intention – to betray Jesus for a bargain price!

Space for you to make some notes . . . . .

# Study 9 - Judas Iscariot

## (Turning Away)

The most notorious of all the disciples – and the one universally scorned – is Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus. His name appears in every list of the Apostles (except in **Acts 1**), and it always appears last. Eleven apostles are an encouragement to us because they show how common people can be used by God, even with all their failures, to do remarkable things. Judas, on the other hand, stands as a warning about the power of spiritual carelessness and pride, which can drag us away from loyalty to Christ.

Judas was as close to Jesus as humanly possible for three years. He heard every teaching; he saw every miracle. But in all that time his heart only grew harder. The other disciples were being transformed by Jesus into passionate followers; Judas was being changed too – into Satan's instrument of deceit and betrayal.

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:** Have you ever had a friend or colleague that appeared to be loyal, but in the end was a betrayer? Think back to any acts of betrayal or mistrust you have committed. What have you done about confessing those deeds to God and to those you have hurt? What more can you do?

***Read Matthew 26 v. 14 – 30***

### **QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:**

What evidence do you see in this passage that shows Judas's treachery and hypocrisy towards Jesus? What evidence do you see of Jesus' grace towards Judas?

Why do you think Jesus selected Judas in the first place to be one of his closest followers?

***Read Matthew 26 v. 47 – 50***

What sign did Judas use to single out Jesus and how is that act a continuing demonstration of Judas's deceit and betrayal?

Put yourself in the garden as one of Jesus' followers. How would you have felt as the crowd approached and what do you think your reaction would have been?

***Read Matthew 27 v. 1 – 10***

What evidence of Judas's sorrow for his actions do you find in this passage? Do you think his repentance was genuine?

If Judas had come to you with the admission of **Matthew 27 v. 4**, what would you have encouraged Judas to do?

What can you say to a friend who is feeling guilty and depressed over something he or she has done?

Over what issues or mistakes do people decide to kill themselves? Is that ever a good choice? Why or why not?

How can we avoid being like Judas? (And if you say: 'I could never do what he did,' you may already be moving in that direction).

# Now or Later

Theologians have debated for two thousand years about Judas. Some Christians believe that Judas was never truly a believer, that he was a hypocrite from the beginning and that his false profession was finally revealed in his betrayal. They conclude that Judas was never saved. Other Christians believe that Judas was a genuine believer at the beginning but gradually drifted away from faith, and in the end he made a deliberate act of apostasy from the Lord. He denied Christ and in the process renounced his faith. So, in their minds, Judas was a genuine believer who rejected God's grace and ultimately was lost.

Which of these views seems most consistent with the biblical evidence to you? Who can you talk with who might be able to give you more insight? What issues or difficulties are raised by the position you take?

**Ask Jesus to keep your heart open and responsive to him.  
Thank him again for his grace to you.**

