



Judas and the Boundaries of Forgiveness

Session 2: Judas as Object of Horror

Super Wednesday Bible Study: 9/19/18

1. Brain Starter

The Prodigal Son (1496) by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528)

2. The moral of the story is...

- Consider Heinrich Hoffman (1809-1894) and his *Struwwelpeter* morality stories for children. How did he attempt to use these horrific and graphic stories to impact the conduct of readers? Do we do that as well? How?

3. Multiple Choice: Judas as the Moral of the Story

- A. Judas and Satan were the primary adversaries of Jesus.
- B. Judas exemplifies the horrific fate that befalls sinners.
- C. All of the above.

4. Who is to blame? Satan or Judas?

- **Luke 6:13-16**

Judas listed last, and named a traitor from the outset.

Note that for Luke, "the Twelve" is a way of describing not just the twelve disciples but also the Church of Luke's audience. Judas's presence then speaks not only to a past event but a present reality.

- **Luke 4:1-13**

This is Luke's version of the temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness. (See Matt. 4:1-11 and Mark 1:12-13).

Luke adds an ominous detail in verse 13: "When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time."

- **Luke 22:3-6**

The opportune time comes...

- **Luke 22:47-48, 52-53**

Note the "power of darkness"

"The betrayal by an intimate, which was so painful, ironic, and mysterious in Mark's version, becomes in Luke's version another example of Jesus loving his enemies and sharing his table with them, as he has throughout Luke's Gospel." *Paffenroth*, p. 20

5. The temptation of Judas

"Satanic influence over Judas allows Luke partly to resolve his problem of Judas's dual nature: insofar as he was a chosen apostle of Jesus, he partook of all the authority that Jesus granted him, including the ability to perform miracles (Luke 9:1-6); but insofar as he was a chosen instrument of Satan, he partook of Satan's evil and relinquished any claim to be Jesus' follower. Satan provides Luke with an important explanation for the transformation of an apostle into an enemy." *Paffenroth*, p. 20

6. Balancing Satan's temptation against Judas's "Yes"

- **Luke 22:21-23** Note the "woe" pronounced over Judas.
- **Acts 1:16-20**

Judas's awful death is portrayed as the inevitable outcome for a sinner. This is consistent with the outcomes suffered by Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) and Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:20-23).

- *Piling On*: "Judas by hanging himself heightened rather than expiated that crime of dastardly betrayal – because by despairing of God's mercy he abandoned himself to an impenitent remorse and left no room in his soul for saving sorrow." Augustine, in *City of God*

7. Judas as the Poster Child of Sin

- Arabic Infancy Gospel (Judas's sin is deeply rooted in childhood)
- Medieval Passion Plays and Dante's *Divine Comedy* portray Judas as the worst of the worst, sentenced to eternally suffer.
- Judas becomes a curse.
- Judas becomes a synonym for serious ailments. "Oh fever, lose your heat as Judas lost his color when he betrayed our Lord."
- Judas invoked in celebration (effigies and rattles)

8. Judas as Object of Horror

"Although Judas is eternally trapped on the other side of the abyss, his story has been used to lead people from the darkness of the cross to the hope and light of the resurrection. Unable to benefit from the lessons of his own story, Judas nonetheless benefits others." *Paffenroth*, p. 32

9. Next Week: September 26

Judas as Object of Hatred