



— Judas: Almost —

John 12, Mark 14
Small Group Plan

The name Judas is a noble name going back to one of the sons of Jacob who had been a hero in the hearts of the Jewish people for centuries. He produced David and Solomon and everyone expects the Messiah to come from his line. After him another Judas (Judas Maccabaeus) had led a courageous rebellion against Israel's enemies in 164 BC. And while many others had failed, he succeeded in winning independence for his people. Since his story was also heroic many families gave their sons the name of this champion. In fact, by the time of Jesus his name has become so common that Jesus has a brother named Judas and two of the twelve Apostles also wear the name Judas.

It is a beloved name in Jesus' day, but not in ours. Few of us today would even dream of giving the name Judas to their child.

For three plus years Judas has listened to the most amazing teacher ever known. He heard the truth spoken and then experienced it lived out in this man Jesus Christ.

But the more Judas heard the more he rejected, and the more he rejected the more his heart hardened. He no longer responded to the teaching ministry of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Judas gradually hardened to the point that his heart became a convenient place for Satan himself to live, leading to Jesus' betrayal and death.

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- What were Judas' parents hoping for him with the giving of this name?
- After following Jesus so closely, why does Judas eventually "betray" him?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

— GRATITUDE OR CRITICISM —

John 12:1-6 (cf. Mark 14:1-5)

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. ³ Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot,

who was later to betray him, objected,⁵ “Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.”⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

The powerful fragrance of Mary’s gift completely covers Jesus, permeating his clothes, drenching his hair and his beard. And as he moves through the next two days of shame, the aroma of Mary’s honor goes with him. As he enters the upper room, walks through the garden, is led into the home of the high priest and stands in both Herod’s hall and Pilate’s Praetorium. Even as he is nailed to the cross. Priests, kings, governors, soldiers — everyone will smell the aroma. Wherever Jesus goes, Mary’s devotion goes with him.

- True love (Mary’s) doesn’t always stop to calculate and measure. Why?
- Judas may be criticizing Mary’s generosity, but describe what is growing inside his own critical, selfish heart.

— PRIMED FOR PROMPTING —

Mark 14:10-11

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹ They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

Just as Mary’s anointing is a fitting prelude to Jesus’ death (v. 8), so also Judas’ decision to betray Jesus matches the chief priest’s murder plot. But neither Mary nor Judas could have known how the future would unfold. They were both prepared for their very different opportunities. But what primed them for their roles?

- For Mary — How had her time listening and yielding to Jesus prepared her for her role?
- For Judas — How had His time resisting Jesus influence prepared him for his role?
- Why are the chief priests “delighted” to hear Judas?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

In the Old Testament, three kinds of people were anointed ...

- ... **Prophets** who bring the word of God
- ... **Priests** who build the bridge to God
- ... **Kings** who lead the people for God

- How does Jesus fill all three roles?
- Which role touches you most deeply at this point in your life?

But there is one more kind of person who is anointed ... the dead. This is how Jesus sees Mary’s gift. In fact, in order for the other three roles to come together, he must die.

- In her anointing Mary gave without words. How can we give without words?
- Like Mary, how can we open the door to God and close it to Satan?
- Close in prayer asking for eyes to see and ears to hear God’s prompting.