

## 4<sup>th</sup> Lenten Service

### “And Lead us not into Temptation”

**Text: Luke 22:47-53 (NIV)**

<sup>47</sup>While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, <sup>48</sup>but Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” <sup>49</sup>When Jesus’ followers saw what was going to happen, they said, “Lord, should we strike with our swords?” <sup>50</sup>And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. <sup>51</sup>But Jesus answered, “No more of this!” And he touched the man’s ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup>Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? <sup>53</sup>Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns.



**Theme: Tempted to Betray His Lord**

When Jesus was tempted by the devil, the devil used all of the wealth of the world to tempt Him to betray His Father and fall down and worship the devil. With regard to Judas it was a measly 30 pieces of silver to betray the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. How could Judas fall so far that He would fall into this horrible temptation to betray his Savior for a small sum of money?

I. Betrayal is one of the worst temptation that we can fall into.

Those who betray someone become their biggest enemies. It was fitting that Judas led the crowd that came to arrest Jesus. As Jesus prayed on the cross, many of those who were crucifying Him didn’t know what they were doing, but Judas knew exactly what he was doing. He had taken a long time to plan out this evening. He hated His Lord and allowed satan to enter his heart.

We often see the same thing today. The most militant antichristian people are those who at one time were Christians. They have rejected the Lord. They hate Him and everything that He stands for. They despise those who are Christians. They are the first in line when there is harm to be done to our Lord and His people.

This was despite of all that Judas had seen and heard. There was a day when Jesus said, “*Follow Me,*” and Judas joyfully followed our Lord. He heard the Lord preach. He personally saw the effect that this preaching was having on people. Many people were repenting of their sins and believing in God’s forgiveness for them. He personally watched Jesus heal hundreds of people, the sick, the lame, the blind, and even witnessed the raising of a few people from the dead. In Gethsemane he would witness another miracle when Jesus healed the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. But it went further than that. Jesus also sent the 12 disciples out to preach the Gospel, heal people, and cast out demons. They were amazed at how the demons had to submit to them when they returned.

Now the same devil that Judas cast out of other people, entered him. He betrayed His Lord with a kiss. This was an act of pure hypocrisy. The kiss was a sign of brotherly love in biblical times. You would greet your friends with a kiss. But whom was Judas fooling? Jesus knew exactly what he was doing, even the crowd behind him who came to arrest Jesus knew what Judas was doing. The only person that he was fooling was himself.

## II. How could Judas have fallen into this temptation to betray his Savior?

I looked at the answer to that question in our first lenten service. He always had that picture of Mary in his head. She broke that expensive jar of perfume and poured it over Jesus' feet. That perfume could have been sold, and Judas would have received the money to take care of. He would have helped himself to a good portion of it because He was a thief.

Here we learn an important lesson about temptation. Luther once said that it begins like a small thread. It doesn't seem very dangerous at all, but when we dwell on it, it becomes a chain which binds us, and we cannot free ourselves from it, no matter how hard we try. Another example is that it seems like a nice house cat at first, which we pet, but before we know it, it becomes a wild beast that has us in its grasp and won't let go. That's what happened with Judas. It didn't matter how many times the Lord warned him, he could not get that picture out of his head. He was so mad at Mary wasting that money and at his Lord for telling him to leave her alone, that this little annoyance became pure hatred toward our Lord.

## III. Don't we fall in the same way.

It starts out as a small temptation, which we think that we can control. But we begin to dwell on it. We just can't let it go. It doesn't matter how often we have been warned to get out of there. We wouldn't listen. Now there is no way that we can flee that temptation. It has us in its grasp. It won't let us go. If we are not saved from that temptation, we will be the head of the delegation to betray our Lord. Despite all the love that He has given to us, despite all the good things that He was able to do through us, we would rather betray Him, than give up that temptation. Here is how it played out for Judas. One day he probably took a little bit out of the treasury, then a little more, and a little more all the time. Before you knew it, he was angry at his Lord because an opportunity was squandered for more money, which he could have stolen. He was so angry, that it led him to betray his Lord. The same will happen to us. If we do not flee that temptation when we have the chance, it will grab us and not let us go.

## IV. How does Jesus respond tho those who betray Him?

He names the sin. Jesus said, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" There are three things that I noticed in that short little sentence. Jesus names the sin of betray. He reveals how serious this sin is, that Judas is betraying the Son of Man, the promised Savior; and He reveals Judas hypocrisy, that He is doing is with a kiss. There are other examples of that in the Bible. Nathan told King David, "You did it secretly, but I will do this thing in broad daylight before all Israel." (2 Sam 12:12) Jesus revealed to the woman at the well that the man she was living with was not her husband. He is clear that He knows our sins. We might be able to hide them from other people, but He knows every one of them, and as in several examples in the Bible, He is able to reveal them to

the whole world. His word reveals our sin, its gravity, and even our own hypocrisy.

But He also calls us to repentance. Even as Judas was betraying Jesus, the Lord still called Him, "Friend." Right after Peter denied His Lord, Jesus looked at him with compassion." There is only one way in which we can be freed from temptation. That is to confess our sin like David did when he said, "*I have sinned against the Lord,*" and to look to Jesus for forgiveness. He gave His innocent life on the cross as the payment for all of our sins, even for Judas' sin of betrayal. When we look to Him for forgiveness, no matter how grave our sin had been, the chains are broken, and we are freed. He frees us from sin and temptation by the victory that He won for us on Calvary.

The story of Judas' betrayal is probably the most tragic story of all time. Despite all of our Lord's warnings and pleas, Judas had fallen into temptation so far, that he hated the Lord who loved him. Don't follow his example, but listen to that voice of your Savior, that calls you from temptation and sin to follow Him in His forgiveness and righteousness for you.

Amen.

***Pastor Don Hougard  
Benediction Lutheran Church  
Milwaukee, WI  
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